



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2686

Reveille in the amphibious ships went at 0300 on the morning of 15 September. Marines hoped for the traditional "steak-and-eggs" D-day breakfast of World War II, but most transports fed simpler fare, such as powdered eggs and canned apricots. Breakfast on board the landing ships was even more spartan.

ed from his free boat a few minutes later. At almost the same time, Captain Robert A. McMullen brought in the fourth wave bearing Company I, the battalion reserve. His company, following behind Company H, encountered an angry

nest of about a platoon of bypassed North Koreans. A flurry of hand grenades was exchanged. McMullen signaled Sweet's tanks to come forward. A Sherman with a dozer blade sealed the die-hard North Koreans in their holes.

By 0655, the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, had landed on Wolmi-do and had an American flag flying at the top of a

shell-blasted tree. An hour later the battalion commander reported resistance as light and 45 dazed prisoners taken.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-GK-2341-A2694



Moving on to the near end of the causeway that stretched to Inchon itself, McMullen found more North Korean defenders hiding in a cave. One of Sweet's tanks fired a 90mm round into the mouth of the cave. There was a muffled explosion and 30 dazed and deafened North Koreans came staggering out with their hands above their heads. "Captured forty-five prisoners . . . meeting light resistance," radioed Taplett at 0745 to the *Mount McKinley*.

Wildman's Marines were finding it slow going in the ruins of the industrial area. Taplett ordered Bohn to take the rest of Radio Hill and by 0800 the high ground was Marine Corps property.

'Wolmi-do Secured'

Once again Taplett radioed the *Mount McKinley*, this time: "Wolmi-do secured."

With the success of the Marine landing blaring over the loudspeakers, MacArthur left the bridge



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2798

Some North Korean defenders of Wolmi-do stubbornly remained in their cave-like positions and had to be burned out by flamethrowers. U.S. Marines were readily distinguishable at this stage of the war by their wear of camouflage helmet covers and leggings.

to pen a message to Admiral Struble in his flagship *Rochester*: "The Navy and Marines have never shone more brightly than this morning."

Ashore, Taplett consolidated his gains. His three rifle companies, by prearranged plan, took up defensive positions facing Inchon. The empty swimming pool at the tip of North Point became a stockade for prisoners.

At about 10 o'clock Taplett ordered Bohn to take Sowolmi-do, an islet dangling to the south of Wolmi-do with a lighthouse at the end of the causeway. Bohn sent Second Lieutenant John D. Counselman, leader of his 3d Platoon, with a rifle squad and a section of tanks. As a prelude to the assault, a flight of Corsairs drenched Sowolmi-do with napalm. Covered by the two tanks and a curtain of 81mm mortar fire, Counselman's riflemen crossed the narrow causeway, taking fire from a hill honey-combed with em-

placements. Flamethrowers and 3.5-inch rocket launchers burned and blasted the dug-in enemy. Seventeen were killed, 19 surrendered, and eight or more managed to hide out. The lighthouse was

M-26 Pershing tanks, new to the Marines, began to land in the third wave at Wolmi-do and were soon put to use against North Korean fortified positions. A tank-infantry patrol assaulted and took Sowolmi-do, an islet dangling at the end of a causeway from the main island.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC)



taken and the job completed in less than two hours. Three Marines were wounded, bringing Taplett's casualties for the day to none killed, 17 wounded.

Word was passed that some of the North Koreans who had escaped were trying to swim for Inchon. A number of Bohn's Marines lined up rifle-range fashion and shot at what they saw as heads bobbing in the water. Others dismissed the targets as imaginary. Mopping up of the island was completed by noon.

Taplett, growing restless and seeing no sign of enemy activity, proposed to division that he make an assault on the city from his present position or at least a reconnaissance in force. Smith responded to his proposal with a firm negative.

Waiting for Evening Tide

The remainder of the division was steaming toward the inner transport area. There would now be a long wait until the evening tide swept in and the assault regi-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2723

Marines from the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, escorted a steady stream of prisoners back to Green Beach on the seaward side of Wolmi-do. Landing ships and craft could beach as long as the tide was high, but once the tide receded they would be left high and dry on the mud flats.

ments could be landed. Marines, standing at the rail of their transports, strained their eyes looking for their intended beaches but could see nothing but smoke. The bombardment, alternating between naval gunfire and air strikes, continued.

During the course of the afternoon, Admiral Struble had his admiral's barge lowered into the water from the *Rochester* ("Roach-Catcher"). He swung by the *Mount McKinley* to pick up General MacArthur for a personal reconnaissance from close offshore of Wolmi-do and the harbor. Almond and Shepherd went with them.

They swung close to the seawall fronting the harbor. "General," said Shepherd, "You're getting in mighty close to the beach. They're shooting at us." MacArthur ignored the caution.

Naval gunfire and carrier air sought to hit everything that could

be found in the way of targets within a 25-mile radius of Inchon. (The D-Day action for the aircraft on board the carrier *Boxer* was labeled "Event 15" and consisted of a strike with 12 F4U Corsairs and five AD Skyraiders.) The smoke of the bombardment and from burning buildings mixed with the rain so that a gray-green pall hung over the city.

H-Hour for the main landing was 1730. Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray's 5th Marines, minus the 3d Battalion already ashore on Wolmi-do, was to land over Red Beach, to the left and north of Wolmi-do. Murray's regiment was to seize the O-A line, a blue arc on the overlay to the division's attack order. On the ground O-A line swung 3,000 yards from Cemetery Hill on the north or left flank, through Observatory Hill in the center, and then through a maze of buildings, including the British Consulate,

A corpsman bandages the forearm of a wounded North Korean prisoner on Wolmi-do. He and other prisoners were moved to one of the several prison stockades that were set up on the landing beaches.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2802





Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348839

Gen MacArthur indulged his passion for visiting the "front." During the interval between the morning and evening landings he personally "reconnoitered" the Inchon beaches in

VAdm Arthur D. Struble's barge. Struble sits to MacArthur's right. On his left is Army MajGen Courtney Whitney, often-called MacArthur's "press secretary."

until it reached the inner tidal basin.

The 1st and 2d Battalions, 5th Marines, under Lieutenant Colonels George R. Newton and Harold S. Roise respectively, would land abreast across Red Beach. The new 1st ROK Marine Regiment would follow them ashore.

Newton and Roise had the Pusan Perimeter behind them, but not much other infantry experience. Newton, commissioned in 1938 from the Naval Academy, was with the Embassy Guard at Peking when World War II came on 7

December 1941 and spent the war as a prisoner of the Japanese. Roise, commissioned from the University of Idaho in 1939, had served at sea during the war.

In the assault, Newton's 1st Battalion and Roise's 2d Battalion would come away from the attack transports *Henrico* and *Cavalier* (APA 37) in landing craft. Both battalions would land in column of companies across the seawall onto narrow Red Beach. Newton, on the left, was to take Cemetery Hill and the northern half of Observatory Hill. Roise, on the right, was to take his half of Observatory Hill,

the British Consulate, and the inner tidal basin.

"Two things scared me to death," said Roise of the landing plan. "One, we were not landing on a beach; we were landing against a seawall. Each LCVP had two ladders, which would be used to climb up and over the wall. This was risky Two, the landing was scheduled for 5:30 p.m. This would give us only about two hours of daylight to clear the city and set up for the night."

Captain Francis I. "Ike" Fenton, Jr., commander of Company B in Newton's battalion, sharply

Lieutenant Colonel Raymond L. Murray

Seldom does a Marine Corps regiment go into combat with a lesser grade than full colonel in command. But when Brigadier General Edward Craig arrived at Camp Pendleton in July 1950 to form the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade for service in Korea he found no reason to supplant the commanding officer of the 5th Marines, Lieutenant Colonel Raymond Murray. The tall, rangy Texan was an exception to the general rule. He had already made his reputation as a fighter and of being a step ahead of his grade in his assignments. As a major at Guadalcanal he had commanded the 2d Battalion, 6th Marines, and for his conspicuous gallantry had earned his first Silver Star.

After Guadalcanal, came Tarawa for the battalion and a second Silver Star for Murray, now a lieutenant colonel. Finally, at Saipan, although he was painfully wounded, Murray's control of his battalion was such that it brought him a Navy Cross.

Novelist Leon Uris served in Murray's battalion. Later, when he wrote his book *Battle Cry*, he used Murray as his model for "High Pockets" Huxley, his hard-charging fictional battalion commander.

Born in Alhambra, California, in 1913, Murray grew up in Harlingen, Texas. When he accepted his commission in July 1935, after graduating from Texas A&M College, then the incubator of many Army and Marine officers, he had behind him four years of the Army's Reserve Officers Training Corps and two years of the Texas National Guard. He had also starred at football and basketball. After attending Basic School, then in the Philadelphia Navy Yard, he was detailed to the 2d Marine Brigade in San Diego. The brigade went to troubled China a year later. Murray served for a short time in Shanghai, then moved to a prized slot in the Embassy Guard in Peking. He came back to San Diego in 1940 and returned to the 2d Marine Brigade which within months expanded into the 2d Marine Division. A 1st Provisional Marine Brigade was pulled out of the 2d Division in the summer of 1941 for service in Iceland. Murray, now a captain and soon to be a major, went with it. He was back in San Diego in April 1942 and in October sailed with the 6th Marines for the war in the Pacific.

He came home in August 1944 and served at Quantico, Camp Lejeune, Hawaii, and Camp Pendleton. Promotions were slow after 1945 and Murray was still a lieutenant colonel when the Korean War began in 1950. As commander of the infantry element of the later-day 1st Provisional Marine Brigade in the "fire brigade" defense of the Pusan Perimeter, he received his third and fourth

Silver Stars for his staunch leadership.

At Inchon, Major General O. P. Smith gave Murray and his now-seasoned regiment the more complicated northern half of the landing. After Inchon and Seoul, Murray would continue in command through the Chosin Reservoir campaign. That battle in sub-zero weather brought him the Army's Distinguished Service Cross as well as his second Navy Cross. Finally, in January 1951 he was promoted to colonel.

Coming home from Korea in April 1951, he attended the National War College and then was hand-picked to command The Basic School, since World War II at Quantico. Next he served at Camp Pendleton and Camp Lejeune. A promotion to brigadier general came in June 1959. Assignments in Okinawa, then Pendleton again, and Parris Island followed. Serving at Headquarters Marine Corps in 1967 as a major general, he was ordered to Vietnam as Deputy Commander, III Marine Amphibious Force. His strong physique finally failed him. He was invalided home in February 1968 to Bethesda Naval Hospital where he remained until his retirement on 1 August 1968. He now lives in Oceanside, California, close to Camp Pendleton.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A42922





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2865

Navy transports stand off Inchon and Wolmi-do before the landing. Amphibious lift for Inchon, some of it literally borrowed back from the Japanese, was a rusty travesty of the great amphibious armadas of World War II.

remembered the characteristics of Red Beach:

Once on the beach there was an open area of about 200 yards. The left flank was marked by Cemetery Hill. From the sea it looked like a sheer cliff. To the right of Cemetery Hill was a brewery, some work shops, and a cotton mill. Further to the right and about 600 yards in from the beach was Observatory Hill, overlooking the entire landing area and considered critical; it was the regimental objective. Further to the right was a five-story office building built of concrete and reinforced steel.

Captain John R. Stevens' Company A was to land on the right flank. In the assault would be the 2d Platoon under Second Lieutenant Francis W. Muetzel and the 1st Platoon under Gunnery Sergeant Orval F. McMullen. In reserve was the 3d Platoon under First Lieutenant Baldomero Lopez, who had joined the company as it loaded out from Pusan.

Three miles to the south of the 5th Marines, Chesty Puller's 1st Marines was to land across Blue

Beach. Puller's mission was to secure the O-1 line, a 4,000-yard arc that went inland as deep as 3,000 yards, and then hooked around to the left to cut off Inchon from Seoul.

Blue Beach One, 500 yards wide, had its left flank marked by a salt evaporator. What looked to be a road formed the boundary to the south with Blue Beach Two.

The 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, was under affable, white-haired Lieutenant Colonel Allan Sutter. After landing over Blue Beach One, he was to take a critical road junction about 1,000 yards northeast of the beach, and Hill 117, nearly two miles inland, which commanded Inchon's "back door" and the highway to Seoul, 22 miles away.

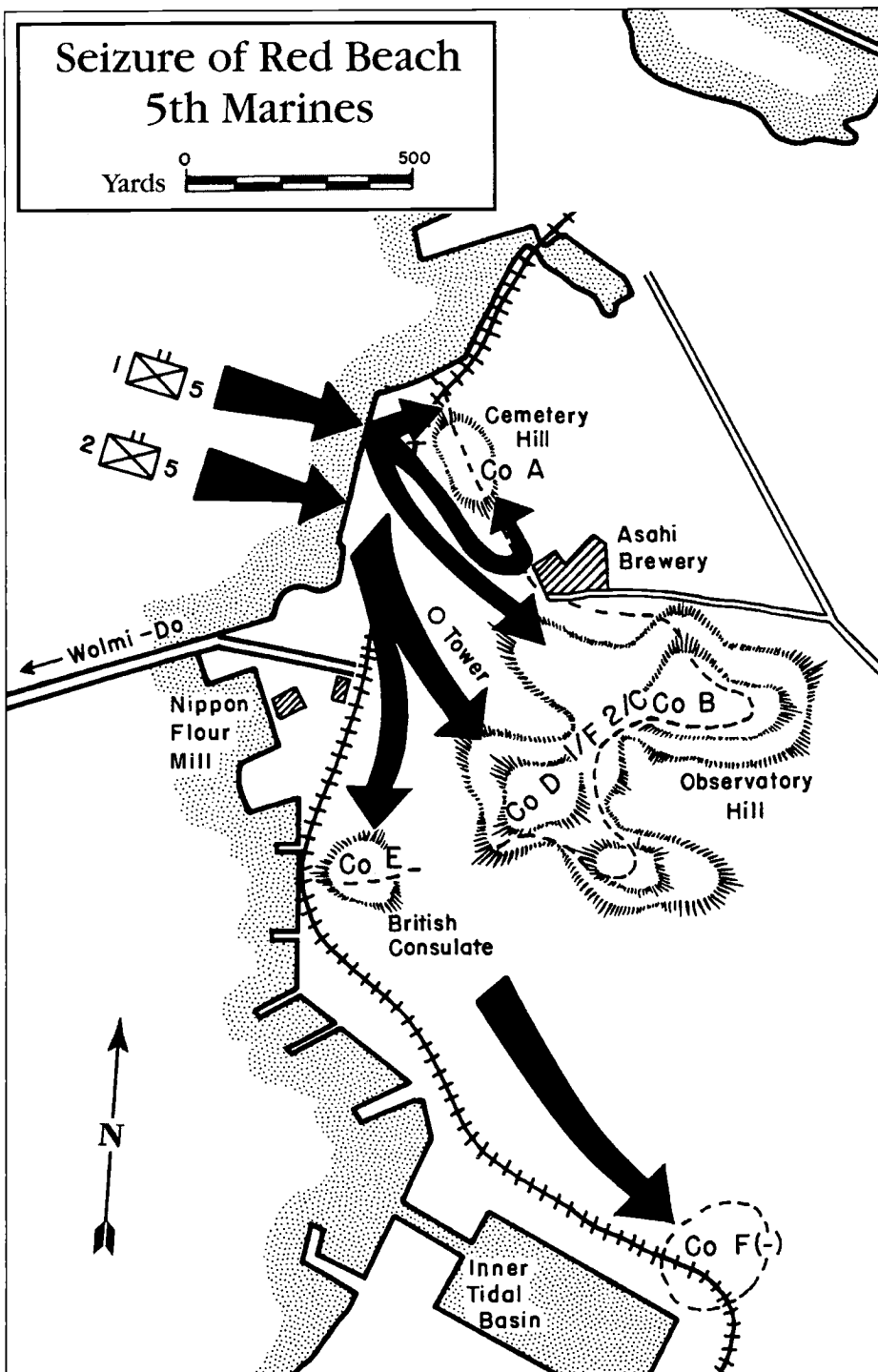
Sutter, a graduate of Valley Forge Military Academy and Dartmouth College, had gained his Marine Corps commission in 1937 through the Platoon Leaders Course, a program under which college students spent two summers at Quantico to qualify as second lieutenants. He then spent a year at the Basic School in Philadelphia before being assigned troop duties. During World War II, Sutter was a signal officer at Guadalcanal, Guam, and Okinawa.

Blue Beach Two, also 500 yards wide, had its left flank marked by the supposed road and its right flank by a narrow ramp jutting seaward. A cove, further to the right, named at the last minute "Blue Beach Three," offered an alternate or supplementary landing site. Ridge, with the 3d Battalion, was to cross the seawall girdling Blue Beach Two and take Hill 233, a mile southeast of the beach, and, on the extreme right, a small cape, flanking Blue Beach and topped by Hill 94.

At best, the four assault battalions coming across Red and Blue Beaches would have but two hours of high tide and daylight to turn the plan into reality. Smith, after fully committing his two regiments, would have nothing left as a division reserve except two half-trained Korean Marine battalions.

Assaulting Red Beach

It would be a long ride to Red Beach for the 1st and 2d Battalions of the 5th Marines. Troops began debarking from the transports at about 1530. "As you climb down that net into the LCVP you're scared," remembered Private First Class Doug Koch of Company D, 5th Marines. "What keeps you



going is knowing this is what you have to do."

The *Horace A. Bass* (APD 124), the Red Beach control vessel, slowly steamed ahead with a long file of landing craft "trailing behind like a brood of ducklings."

The supporting rocket ships let go with a final fusillade of some 6,500 5-inch rockets. The resulting cloud of dust and smoke com-

pletely masked the beach area. The *Horace A. Bass*, an escort destroyer converted into a high-speed transport and anxious to get into the fight, banged away with her 5-inch guns. She then dipped her signal flag and the first wave headed for Red Beach.

The eight LCVs in the first wave crossed the line of departure at H-8 with 2,200 yards to go. The

four boats on the left carried the two assault platoons of Company A. Captain Steven's mission was to take Cemetery Hill and to secure the left flank of the beachhead. The four boats on the right carried the assault elements of Captain Samuel Jaskilka's Company E, which was to clear the right flank of the beach and then capture the hill that held the British Consulate.

As the first wave passed the mid-way point, two squadrons of Marine Corps Corsairs—VMF-214 under Lieutenant Colonel Walter E. Lischied and VMF-323 under Major Arnold A. Lund—came in to strafe both Red and Blue Beaches. They exhausted their loads and flew away. Not satisfied, Captain Stevens called for further air strikes against Red Beach. Four Navy A-4D Skyraiders made strafing passes until the wave had only 30 yards to go.

On the right, First Lieutenant Edwin A. Deptula's 1st Platoon, Company E, hit the seawall at 1731, one minute behind schedule. Designated Marines threw grenades up over the seawall, and after they exploded, Deptula took his platoon up the scaling ladders. A few stray rounds whined overhead.

Deptula pushed inland about 100 yards to the railroad tracks against no resistance. The rest of Company E landed about 10 minutes later. Captain Jaskilka (who would retire as a four-star general) quickly re-organized his company near the Nippon Flour Company building just south of the beachhead. Deptula's platoon continued down the railroad tracks to the British Consulate. Jaskilka sent another platoon to cross the railroad tracks and then move up the slope of 200-foot-high Observatory Hill.

On the left flank it was not quite that easy. One of the four landing



Gen Oliver P. Smith Collection, Marine Corps Research Center

Aerial photo of Red Beach shows the pounding it took in the pre-landing naval gunfire and air attacks. The 1st and 2d

Battalions, 5th Marines, landed across this beach immediately north of the causeway leading to Wolmi-do.

craft, with half the 1st Platoon, Company A, on board, lagged behind with engine trouble. The remaining three boats reached the seawall at 1733. Sergeant Charles D. Allen took his half of the 1st Platoon over the wall and received fire from his north flank and from a bunker directly to his front. Several Marines went down.

To Allen's right, Second Lieutenant Frank Muetzel found a breach in the seawall and brought his 2d Platoon ashore. Facing them was a pillbox. Two Marines threw grenades and six bloody North Korean soldiers came out.

Cemetery Hill loomed ahead, but Muetzel's immediate objective was Asahi Brewery. He slipped south of Cemetery Hill and marched unopposed down a street to the brewery. There was a brief indulgence in green beer.

Sergeant Allen, with his half-platoon, was making no progress against the bunker to his front. The second wave landed, bringing in the 3d Platoon under Baldomero Lopez and the missing half of the 1st Platoon. Too many Marines were now crowded into too small a space.

Lopez charged forward alone.

He took out the bunker with a grenade and moved forward against a second bunker, pulling the pin from another grenade. Before he could throw it, he was hit. The grenade dropped by his side. He smothered the explosion with his body. This gained him a posthumous Medal of Honor. Two Marines went against the bunker with flamethrowers. They were shot down but the bunker was taken.

Captain Stevens's boat landed him in Company E's zone of action. Unable to get to his own company, he radioed his executive

officer, First Lieutenant Fred F. Eubanks, Jr., to take charge. Stevens then radioed Muetzel to leave the brewery and get back to the beach where he could help out.

On the way back, Muetzel found a route up the southern slope of Cemetery Hill and launched an assault. The summit was alive with North Koreans, but there was no fight left in them. Dazed and spiritless from the pounding they had taken from the air and sea, they threw up their hands and surrendered. Muetzel sent them down to the base of the hill under guard.

Eubanks' Company E Marines meanwhile had bested the obstructing bunker with grenades and a flamethrower. His 1st and 2d Platoons pushed through and joined Muetzel's 2d Platoon. At 1755, 25 minutes after H-Hour, Captain Stevens fired an amber

flare, signaling that Cemetery Hill was secure. It had cost his company eight Marines killed and 28 wounded.

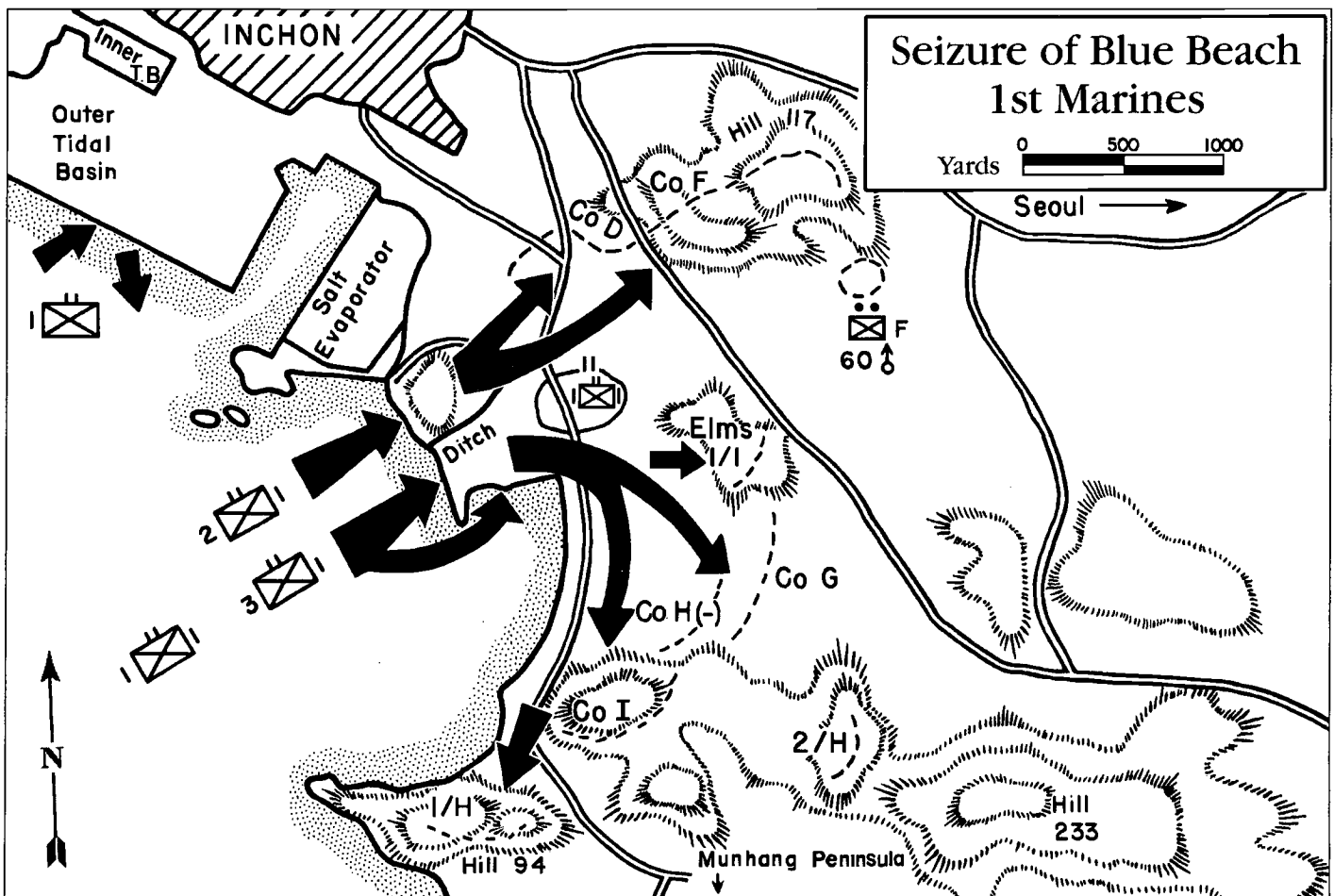
Coming in on the third and fourth waves, Company C, 1st Battalion, was to take the northern half of Observatory Hill, and Company D, 2d Battalion, was to take the southern half. It did not work out quite that way. Parts of Companies C and D were landed on the wrong beaches. Company C, once ashore, had to wait 12 minutes for its commander, Captain Poul F. Pedersen. In Pedersen's boat was the fifth wave commander who had decided to tow a stalled LCVP. Once ashore, Pedersen had trouble sorting out his company from amongst the jumble of Marines that had gathered in the center of the beach.

Maggie Higgins, the *Herald-Tribune* correspondent, came off

the *Henrico* in Wave 5 along with John Davies of the Newark *Daily News*, Lionel Crane of the London *Daily Press*, and a photographer. As their landing craft hit the seawall, the wave commander, First Lieutenant Richard J. "Spike" Schening, urged on his Marines with, "Come on you big, brave Marines. Let's get the hell out of here."

The photographer decided he had had enough and that he would go back to the *Henrico*. Maggie considered doing the same, but then, juggling her typewriter, she, along with Davies and Crane, followed Schening over the seawall.

Eight LSTs crossed the line of departure, as scheduled, at 1830 and were headed for the seawall. Seeing the congestion on Red Beach, the skippers of the LSTs concluded that the Marines were held up and could not advance.





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A3701

Marines enroute to Red Beach go over the side of their assault transport, down the cargo net hand-over-hand, and into the waiting LCVP, a version of the famous "Higgins boat" of World War II.

The lead LST received some mortar and machine-gun fire and fired back with its own 20mm and 40mm guns. Two other LSTs joined in. Unfortunately, they were spraying ground already occupied by the Marines.

The LST fire showered Muetzel's platoon, holding the crest of Cemetery Hill. Muetzel pulled back his platoon. As his Marines slid down the hill, they came under fire from a North Korean machine gun

in a building on Observatory Hill. A chance 40mm shell from one of the LSTs knocked out the gun. Weapons Company and Headquarters and Service Company of Roise's 2d Battalion landed about 1830 and came under LST fire that killed one Marine and wounded 23 others.

By 1900, all eight LSTs had stopped firing and were nestled against the seawall. By then Second Lieutenant Byron L.

Magness had taken his 2d Platoon, Company C, reinforced by Second Lieutenant Max A. Merritt's 60mm mortar section, up to the saddle that divided the crest of Observatory Hill. Their radios were not working and they had no flares. They had to inform the beach of their success by sending back a runner.

Meanwhile, the 1st Battalion's reserve company—Company B under Captain "Ike" Fenton—had landed in the 2d Battalion's zone. Lieutenant Colonel Newton ordered Fenton to assume Company C's mission and take the northern half of Observatory Hill. Six Marines were wounded along the way, but by about 2000 Fenton was at the top and tied in with the Magness-Merritt platoon.

In the right half of the regimental zone of action, Roise was getting the congestion on the beach straightened out. Company D, commanded by First Lieutenant H. J. Smith, had followed Company E ashore, but had landed to the left in the 1st Battalion zone. Smith (called "Hog Jaw" to make up for his non-existent first and second names) understood that Jaskilka's Company E was already on the crest of Observatory Hill. Under that assumption he started his company in route column up the street leading to the top of the hill. An enemy machine gun interrupted his march. After a brisk firefight that caused several Marine casualties, the enemy was driven off and Company D began to dig in for the night. A platoon from Company F, the battalion reserve, filled in the gap between Company D and the Magness-Merritt positions. The only part of the O-A line that was not now under control was the extreme right flank where the line ended at the inner tidal basin.

Maggie Higgins, after seeing the war, such as it was, found a boat



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A3190

Marines go over the seawall forming the sharp edge of Red Beach. The Marine on the ladder has been identified as 1stLt Baldomero Lopez. Moments later he would give his life and earn a posthumous Medal of Honor.

on Red Beach that was returning to the *Mount McKinley*, where, after the personal intercession of Admiral Doyle, she was allowed to stay for the night. She slept on a stretcher in the sick bay. Next day, Admiral Doyle specified that in the future women would be allowed on board only between the hours of nine in the morning and nine at night. (About a month later, Maggie's transportation orders were modified. She would still be allowed on board any Navy ship but would have to be chaperoned by a female nurse.)

Murray, the regimental comman-

der, came ashore at about 1830 and set up his command post at the end of the causeway that led from the mainland to Wolmi-do. Roise wished to stay where he was for the night, but Murray ordered him to reach the tidal basin. Company F, under Captain Uel D. Peters, faced around in the dark and plunged forward. Shortly after midnight, Roise reported that his half of the O-A line was complete.

Assaulting Blue Beach

The confusion was greater on Blue Beach than on Red Beach.

Amphibian tractors, rather than landing craft, were used for the assault. The seawall was in disrepair with numerous breaks up which it was presumed the amphibian tractors could crawl. The 18 Army armored amphibians (LVT[A)s) forming the first wave crossed the line of departure at 1645 and headed toward Inchon. At four knots they needed three-quarters of an hour to hit the beach at H-Hour.

The soldiers had the compasses and seamanship to pierce the smoke and reached the beach on time. The second and following

First Lieutenant Baldomero Lopez

Baldomero Lopez was always eager. During World War II, he was 17 when he enlisted in the Navy in July 1943. Most thought him a Mexican American, but his father, also named Baldomero, as a young man had come to Tampa from the Asturias region of Spain. Los Asturianos, the men of Asturias, are known for their valor and honor.

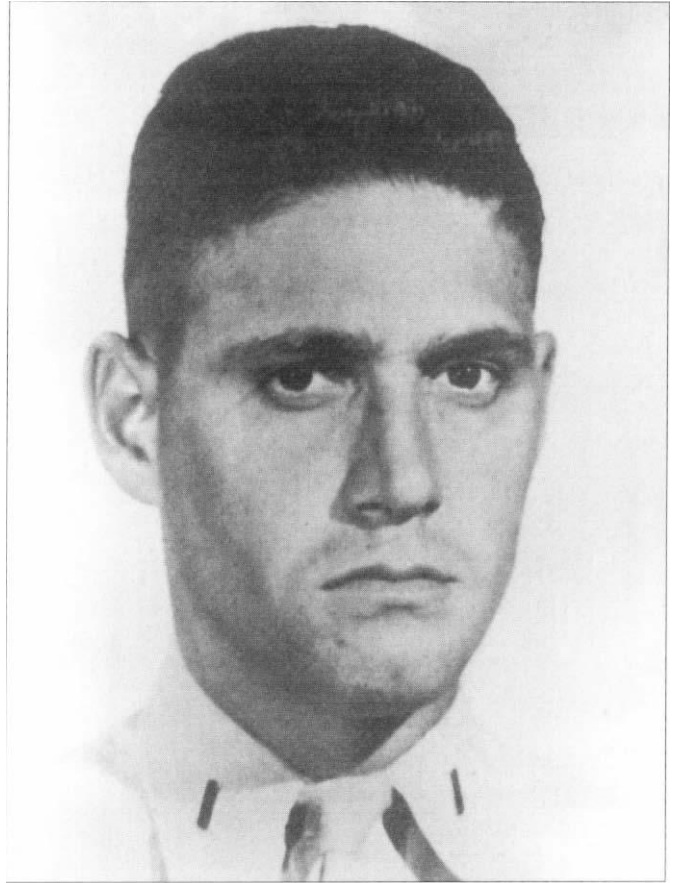
He was appointed from the fleet to the Naval Academy in July 1944. His class, 1948A, was hurried through in three years. Lucky Bag, his class book, called him "one of the biggest hearted, best natured fellows in the brigade." Otherwise he does not seem to have been exceptional. His nickname at the Academy was "Lobo." This changed to "Punchy" after he came into the Marine Corps in June 1947, because it was generally believed that he had boxed while at Annapolis. After Basic School he stayed on at Quantico as a platoon commander in the Platoon Leaders Class. In 1948, he went to North China as part of a Marine presence that was in its last days. He served first as a mortar section leader and then as a rifle platoon commander at Tsingtao and Shanghai.

When the Marines closed out in China, he came back to Camp Pendleton. In the early summer of 1950, when the formation of the 1st Provisional Marine Brigade stripped the 1st Marine Division dry, he asked to be included but was left behind. He went out, however, to Korea in the draft that was sent to Pusan to fill the 5th Marines to war strength before embarking for Inchon. He was given the 3d Platoon, Company A, 1st Battalion.

Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball presented the posthumous Medal of Honor to his father and mother at ceremonies in Washington on 30 August 1951.

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty as a Rifle Platoon Commander of Company A, First Battalion, Fifth Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces during the Inchon invasion in Korea on 15 September 1950. With his platoon, First Lieutenant Lopez was engaged in the reduction of immediate enemy beach defenses after landing with the assault waves. Exposing himself to hostile fire, he moved forward alongside a bunker and prepared to throw a hand grenade into the next pillbox



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A43985

whose fire was pinning down that sector of the beach. Taken under fire by an enemy automatic weapon and hit in the right shoulder and chest as he lifted his arm to throw, he fell backward and dropped the deadly missile. After a moment, he turned and dragged his body forward in an effort to retrieve the grenade and throw it. In critical condition from pain and loss of blood, and unable to grasp the hand grenade firmly enough to hurl it, he chose to sacrifice himself rather than endanger the lives of his men and, with a sweeping motion of his wounded right arm, cradled the grenade under him and absorbed the full impact of the explosion. His exceptional courage, fortitude and devotion to duty reflect the highest credit upon First Lieutenant Lopez and the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

waves did not do so well. Rain and smoke had completely blotted out any view of the beach. From the bridge of his ship, the Blue Beach control officer watched the first two or three waves disappear into the smoke. He requested permis-

sion to stop sending any further waves ashore until he could see what was happening to them. Permission was denied.

As Major Edwin H. Simmons, the commander of Weapons Company, 3d Battalion, 1st

Marines, remembered it:

We had been told that a wave guide would pick us up and lead us to the line of departure . . . Two LCVs did come alongside our wave.



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2816

A key objective for the 5th Marines was the 200-foot-high Observatory Hill. Both the 1st and 2d Battalions converged on the hill with Marines from Company B taking the weather station on its top.

Marines setup a temporary barricade on the causeway to Inchon, after mopping up and consolidating their positions on Wolmi-do. Although not expecting a counterattack, they

position a 3.5-inch rocket launcher and a machine gun just in case. The 3.5-inch rocket launcher proved itself adequate against the vaunted T-34 tank.

National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A2747





Department of Defense Photo (USMC)

Amphibian tractors (LVTs) churn away from the landing ships (LSTs) that brought them to Inchon. "Amtracks" were used chiefly for the assault of Blue Beach within the inner harbor.

another wave. I asked if they were headed for Blue Two. Their wave commander answered, "Hell, no. We're the 2d Battalion headed for Blue One." We then veered off to the right. I broke out my map and asked my LVT driver if he had a compass. He looked at his instrument panel and said, "Search me. Six weeks ago I was driving a truck in San Francisco."

The nine Army LVT(A)s making up the first wave for Blue Beach One got ashore on schedule, but found themselves boxed in by an earth slide that blocked the exit road. The remaining nine Army armored amphibian tractors, forming Wave 1 for Blue Beach Two, made it to the seawall shortly after H-Hour but were less successful in getting ashore. The "road" separating Blue One and Two turned out to be a muck-filled drainage ditch. After exchanging fire with scattered defenders in factory buildings behind the seawall, the Army

vehicles backed off and milled around, getting intermixed with the incoming troop-carrying Waves 2 and 3.

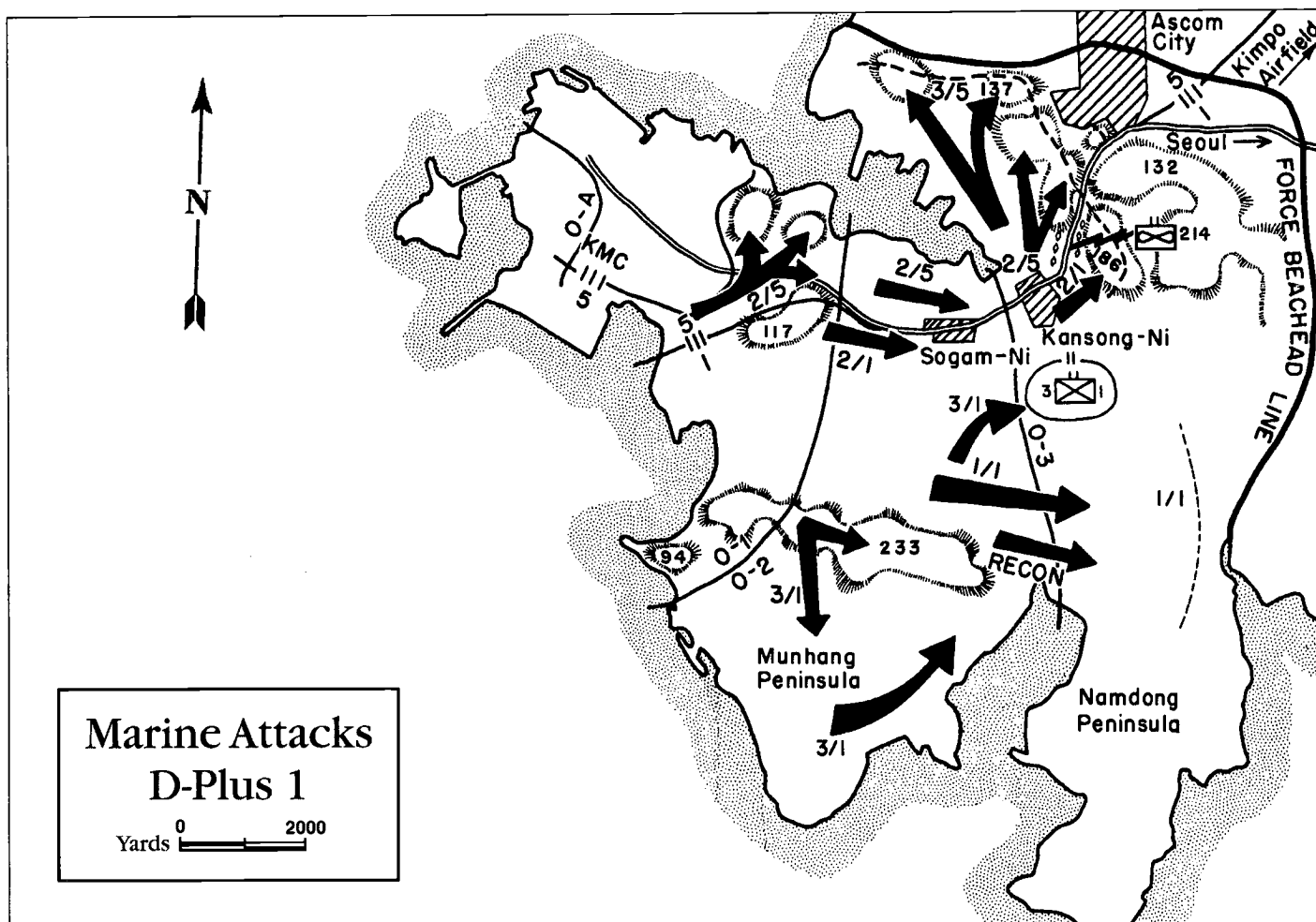
From his seat on the bridge of the *Mount McKinley*, MacArthur, surrounded by his gaggle of generals and admirals, peered through the gathering gloom of smoke, rain, and darkness and listened to the reports crackling over the loud-speaker. From his perspective, all seemed to be going well.

Lieutenant Colonel Sutter's second wave landed elements of both his two assault companies, Company D, under Captain Welby W. Cronk, and Company F, under Captain Goodwin C. Groff, across Blue Beach One shortly after H-Hour. Some of his amphibian tractors hung up on a mud bank about 300 yards offshore and their occupants had to wade the rest of the way. Most of Sutter's last three waves, bringing in his reserve, Company E, drifted to the right. As Sutter reported it: "For some unknown reason the third, fourth, and fifth waves were diverted from

landing either on Beach BLUE-1 or along the rock causeway by a control boat. Instead they were directed to the right of the two beaches prescribed for the regiment and landed at Beach BLUE-3."

Wave 2 for Blue Beach Two, with Ridge's assault companies, passed through the Army tractors, Company G under Captain George C. Westover on the left, Company I under First Lieutenant Joseph R. "Bull" Fisher on the right. They reached the seawall about 10 minutes after H-Hour. The tractors bearing Company G formed up in column and muddled their way up the drainage ditch. Company I went over the seawall using aluminum ladders, some of which buckled. Assault engineers from Captain Lester G. Harmon's Company C, 1st Engineer Battalion, reached the wall and rigged cargo nets to help the later waves climb ashore.

Ridge, the 3d Battalion commander, accompanied by his executive office, Major Reginald R. Myers, seeing the congestion on Blue



Beach Two, moved in his free boat to explore the possibilities of Blue Beach Three. He found a mud ramp broken through the seawall and some of his battalion was diverted to this landing point. An enemy machine gun in a tower about 500 yards inland caused a few casualties before it was knocked out by fire from the Army's armored tractors.

More serious problems confronted Lieutenant Colonel Jack Hawkins' 1st Battalion, which was in regimental reserve. Boated in LCPV landing craft, he was ordered by Puller, who was already ashore, to land his battalion. If things had gone well Hawkins should have beached at about H+45 minutes or 1815. Veering off far to the left in the gloom, his leading waves mistook the wall of the tidal basin for the seawall of Blue Beach Two.

Most of Company B and some of Company A had landed before Hawkins could correct the error. Most of those who landed were re-boated and sent on to Blue Beach Two. Because of a shortage of boats, however, one platoon was left behind. Marching overland to Blue Beach Two this orphan platoon gilded the lily by picking up a bag of prisoners enroute.

The 3d Battalion, 1st Marines' reserve—Company H under Captain Clarence E. Corley, Jr.—landed across Blue Beaches Two and Three. The 1st Platoon, led by First Lieutenant William Swanson, had the mission of securing the right flank of the bridgehead. Swanson slid his platoon behind Company I and moved against a platoon-sized enemy dug in on Hill 94, which topped the fish-hook cape bounding the beach-

head on the south. The North Koreans were driven out, but at a cost. Swanson himself was severely wounded in the thigh and evacuated. (Swanson returned to the 3d Battalion in late winter 1951, was wounded in the hand at the end of March, and killed by one of our own mines on 15 May 1951.)

Corley's Company H, less its 1st Platoon, moved into the gap between Companies G and I. The 2d Platoon, Company H, was sent forward at midnight to outpost Hill 233, a mile to the front, got halfway there, to Hill 180, and received permission to stay put for the night.

Generals Almond and Shepherd came in with the ninth wave, along with Admiral Struble, for a look-see at how events were progressing on Blue Beach. Almond's aide, Lieutenant Haig, had come in to



National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-GK-2341-A409339

On the morning following the landing, the Marines marched through Incheon itself against no resistance. Initially, the Marines enjoyed a 10 to one numerical advan-

tage over the mediocre defense force. North Korean resistance stiffened in both numbers and quality as the attack moved inland toward Seoul.

Red Beach on board one of the LSTs. He had with him Almond's personal baggage and the wherewithal to establish a mobile command post including a van fitted out as sleeping quarters and an office. In transit Haig had lost two of the general's five jeeps, swept over the side of the LST in the typhoon. When Haig met up with his boss, Almond's first question was whether Haig had gotten his baggage ashore without getting it wet.

While the 5th Marines were assaulting Red Beach, Brigadier General Craig—with his brigade dissolved and now the assistant

division commander—came ashore at Wolmi-do and, joining Taplett's 3d Battalion, established an advance division command post. Craig had brought his brigade staff ashore intact to function as an interim division staff. Since his arrival in the objective area, Craig had had no opportunity to meet with O. P. Smith face-to-face.

During the night, Taplett's battalion crossed the causeway from Wolmi-do and rejoined the main body of the 5th Marines on Red Beach. Before morning the 1st Marine Division had all its first day's objectives. Resistance had been scattered—of the sort that

goes down in the situation report as "light to moderate." Total Marine casualties for the first day's fighting were 20 killed, 1 died of wounds, 1 missing in action, and 174 wounded.

Assault Continues

At about midnight Puller and Murray received the division's attack order for the next day. Murray was to bring the 5th Marines up on line abreast of Puller's 1st Marines. The axis for the advance on Seoul would be the intertwined highway and railroad. The Korean Marine regiment



Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348506

Once ashore at Inchon, the Marines see for themselves that naval gunfire had destroyed much of the city. Once ashore, the rule-of-thumb was that each assault battalion would have a cruiser or destroyer available for on-call missions.

was initially left behind in Inchon to mop up.

The day, 16 September, was clear and pleasant. The climate was about the same as our north-eastern states at this time of year, warm during the day, a bit cool at night.

Murray elected to advance in column of battalions, leading off with Roise's 2d Battalion, followed by the 1st and 3d Battalions in that order. The 2d Battalion's advance through Inchon was strangely quiet. The enemy had vanished during the night.

Corsairs Against T-34s

Five miles to Murray's front, six of the vaunted Soviet-built T-34 tanks, without infantry escort, were rumbling down the Seoul highway toward him. Near the village of Kansong-ni, eight Corsairs from VMF-214 swept down on the advancing tanks with rockets and napalm. One Corsair, flown by Captain William F. Simpson, Jr., failed to come out of its dive,

killing Simpson, but the tank attack was halted. One T-34 was engulfed in flames, a second had its tracks knocked off, and a third stood motionless on the road. A second flight of Corsairs came over to finish off the disabled T-34s. The pilots pulled away, thinking incorrectly that all six tanks were dead.

The rubber-tired amphibious DUKW pulls a trailer about a mile outside of Inchon on the first morning after the landing. These "ducks" were used primarily to move guns, ammunition, and supplies for the artillery.

Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348502



On the ground, Roise's 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, made solid contact with Sutter's 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, on Hill 117. The two battalions continued the advance against nothing heavier than sniper fire. By 1100 elements of both battalions were just short of Kansong-ni where they could see the smoke still rising from the fires set by the battle of T-34s and Corsairs.

Meanwhile, General Craig had moved his command group into Inchon itself. On the outskirts of the city, he found what he thought would be a good location for the division command post including a site close by where a landing strip could be bulldozed. He ordered his temporary command post moved forward.

Thirty "SCAJAP" LSTs, manned for the most part with Japanese crews, had been collected for the Inchon landing. Those that were carrying troops did not beach, but sent their passengers off in amphibian tractors. After the assault waves had swept ahead they did beach, when the tides permitted, for general unloading. Beach conditions and the mixed



Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348504

A curious Marine passes three knocked-out T-34 tanks. The vaunted Soviet-built tank proved no match for the array of weapons that the Marines could bring to bear, ranging from

a Corsair fighter-bomber's rockets to the 3.5-inch rocket launchers in the rifle and weapons companies.

quality of the Japanese crews threw the planned schedule for unloading completely out of balance.

The landing and employment of tanks presented problems. The Marines had just received M-26 Pershings as replacements for their

M-4A3 Shermans. Few of the members of Lieutenant Colonel Harry T. Milne's 1st Tank Battalion—except for Company A, which had been with the 5th Marines and had the M-26 at Pusan—were familiar with the Pershing. The tankers received their instruction on the new tanks

on board ship—not the best place for tank training.

Major Vincent J. Gottschalk's VMO-6, the division's observation squadron, began flying reconnaissance missions at first light on D+1, 16 September. VMO-6 possessed eight Sikorsky HO3S-1 helicopters

M-26 Pershing tanks emerge from the maws of beached LSTs ("landing ships, tank") at Inchon. Marine tankers, previously equipped with the obsolescent M-4 Sherman tank,

were re-equipped with the Pershings literally while on their way to the objective area.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC)





Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A130235

Maj Vincent J. Gottschalk, commanding officer of VMO-6, prepares to take off in an OY light observation aircraft. Among the varied missions of the squadron was spotting and adjusting artillery fire on the retreating North Koreans for the ground troops.

and eight OY airplanes and had been with the 1st Brigade at Pusan where for the first time Marines used helicopters in combat. That day, First Lieutenant Max Nebergall pulled a ditched Navy pilot out of Inchon harbor in the first of many rescue operations.

In the 1st Marines' zone of action Puller sent Ridge's 3d Battalion to make a sweep of Munhang Peninsula. Ridge used amphibian tractors as personnel carriers—a bold but dangerous practice—and advanced on a broad front, Companies G and I

abreast with Company H following in reserve. Prisoners and materiel were taken, but there was almost no fighting. By noon the division held the 0-3 line, a front three miles long, secured on both flanks by water. Smith ordered Murray and Puller to move on forward and seize the Force Beachhead Line (FBHL) which would conclude the assault phase of the amphibious operation.

Murray chose to advance in two prongs. Roise with the 2d Battalion would continue to advance with his right flank tied to the Seoul highway. Taplett, coming up from behind with the 3d Battalion was to swing wide to the left. Newton, with the 1st Battalion, would follow in reserve.

Roise's battalion, escorted by Lieutenant Sweet's five M-26 Pershing tanks, moved up the road and at about 1330 rounded the bend into Kansong-ni. Two of Sweet's tanks crawled up a knoll from which they could cover the advancing riflemen. From this vantage point the Marine tankers saw three T-34 tanks, not dead as supposed, but ready for battle with hatches buttoned up and 85mm guns leveled on the bend in the road. Sweet's tanks smacked the T-34s with 20 rounds of armor-piercing shells. The T-34s went up in flames. Company D led the advance past the three burning hulks. Nearby the Marines found the two tanks knocked out earlier by the Corsairs. The sixth tank had vanished.

Company D continued for another thousand yards and then climbed a high hill on the west side of the road. Company F joined Company D on their left. They were still two miles from the Force Beachhead Line, but it looked like a good time and place to dig in for the night.

On Roise's left, Taplett's 3d



Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC349015

For much of the advance up the axis of the Inchon-Seoul highway, and even sometimes traveling cross-country, Marines used amphibian tractors as personnel carriers pro-

tected along the way by M-26 tanks. The North Koreans, in turn, tried to choke off these advances with ambushes and antitank mines.

Battalion advanced uneventfully and now held high ground overlooking the FBHL. His patrols reached the edge of Ascom City—

once the village of Taejong-ni and now the remnants of a huge service command that had been used by the U.S. Army during the occu-

pation—to his front. The sea was to his left.

A Korean civilian eager to assist the advancing forces, shows one of the division's reconnaissance Marines a large cache of dynamite and ammunition hidden in a storage cave. It was one of several caches uncovered by Capt Kenneth Houghton's Marines on the division's right flank.

Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A2821



South of the 5th Marines, Puller's 1st Marines, having spent most of the day pulling together its scattered parts, did not jump off in the new attack until about 1600. Sutter's 2d Battalion went forward on the right of the road past Kansong-ni for a thousand yards and then tied in with Roise's battalion for the night. Hawkins' 1st Battalion filled in between Sutter and Ridge. Ridge's 3d Battalion had done more hiking than fighting and at the end of the day was relieved by the Division Reconnaissance Company, under pugna-cious Captain Kenneth J. Houghton, attached to the 1st Marines as the division's right flank element. Ridge's Marines went into regimental reserve. Houghton's reconnaissance Marines engaged no enemy but found huge caches of arms and ammunition.

O. P. Smith Opens His Command Post

General Craig had just gotten back from his search for a site for the division command post, when he learned that O. P. Smith, accompanied by Admiral Struble and General Shepherd, had landed. Smith was satisfied with Craig's recommended site. Craig then took him for a quick tour of the troop dispositions and at 1800 Smith officially assumed command ashore. During the day, General Almond visited Red Beach and the 5th Marines.

Smith was joined later that evening by Major General Frank E. Lowe, an Army Reserve officer and President Truman's personal observer, who had arrived unannounced. Lowe moved into the division command post. He and Smith got along famously. "His frank and disarming manner made him welcome throughout the division," remembered Smith.

More Enemy T-34 Tanks

The night of 16-17 September was quiet, so quiet, the official history remarks, that a truck coming down the highway from Seoul drove unimpeded through the Marine front lines, until finally stopped by a line of M-26 tanks several hundred yards to the rear. The tankers, the 1st Platoon, Company A, under First Lieutenant William D. Pomeroy, took a surprised NKPA officer and four enlisted men prisoner.

Lieutenant "Hog Jaw" Smith, commander of Company D, 5th Marines, from his observation post overlooking the highway was sufficiently apprehensive, however, about a sharp bend in the road to the left front of his position to outpost it. He dispatched his 2d Platoon with machine guns and



Photo by Frank Noel, Associated Press

Front-line Marines found that stripping a prisoner bare took all the fight out of him and also eliminated the possibility of hidden weapons. Rear-echelon authorities found the practice distasteful and ordered the Marines to desist.

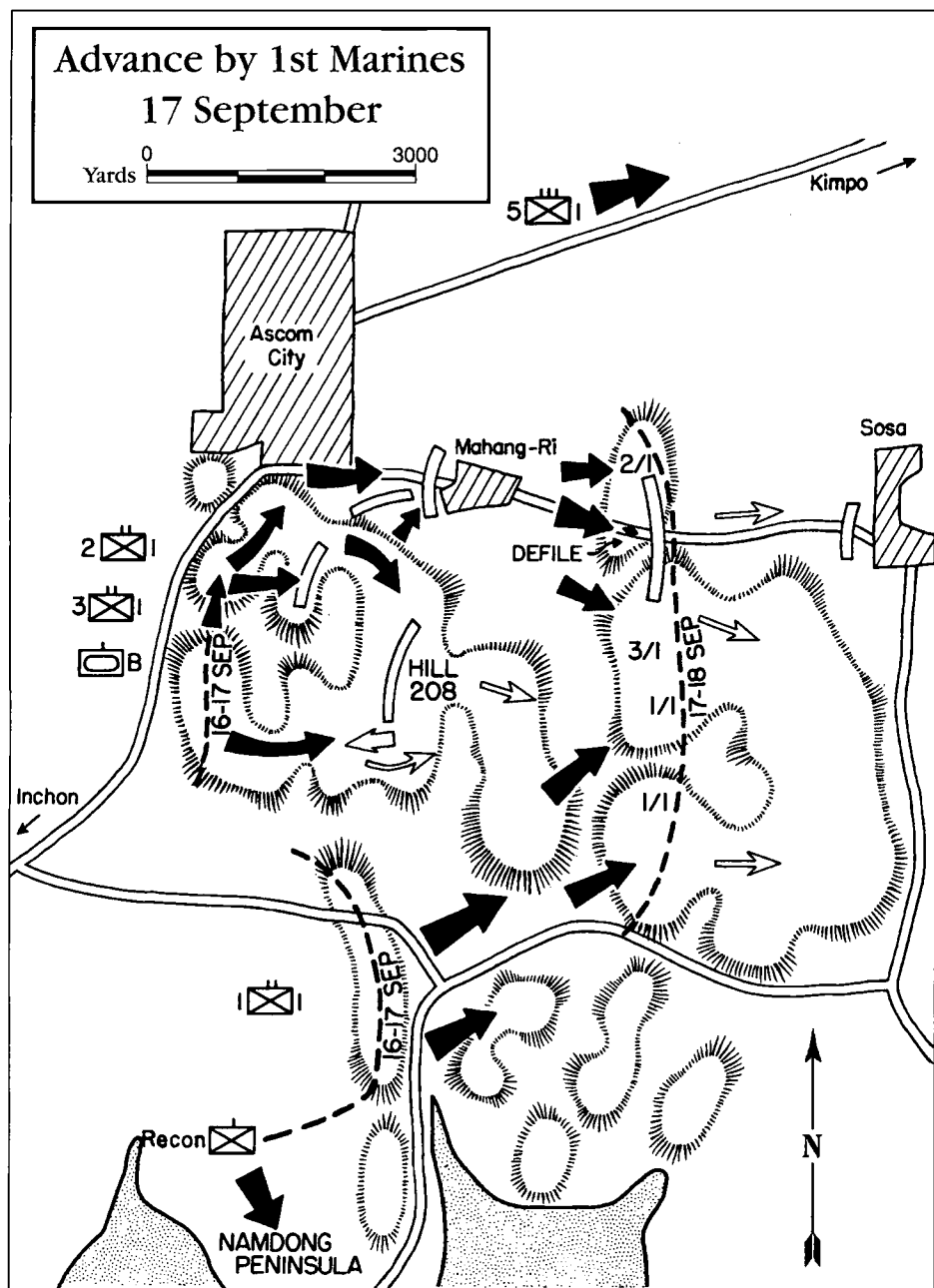
rocket launchers attached, all under Second Lieutenant Lee R. Howard, for that purpose.

During the night the North Koreans formed up a tank-infantry column—six T-34s from the 42d NKPA Mechanized Regiment and about 200 infantry from the 18th NKPA Division in Seoul—some miles east of Ascom City. Howard saw the lead tank at about dawn, reported its approach to "Hog Jaw" Smith, who reported it to Roise, who could not quite believe it. Obviously the North Koreans did not know the Marines were waiting for them. Howard let the column come abreast of his knoll-top position and then opened up. Official historians Montross and Canzona say: "The Red infantry went down under the hail of lead like wheat under the sickle." Corporal Oley J. Douglas, still armed with the 2.36-inch rocket launcher and not the new 3.5-inch, slid down the hill to get a better shot at the tanks. At a range of 75

yards he killed the first T-34 and damaged the second. The remaining four tanks continued to plow forward to be met by a cacophony of 90mm fire from Pomeroy's M-26 tanks at 600 yards range, 75mm recoilless rifle fire at 500 yards, and more rockets, some coming from Sutter's battalion on the other side of the road. Private First Class Walter C. Monegan, Jr., from Company F, 1st Marines, fired his 3.5-inch rocket launcher at point-blank range. Just which weapons killed which tanks would be argued, but the essentials were that all six T-34s were knocked out and their crews killed.

MacArthur Comes Ashore

MacArthur, instantly recognizable in his braided cap, sunglasses, well-worn khakis, and leather flight jacket, came grandly ashore that same morning, 17 September. His large accompanying party included Struble, Almond,



just as the Marines knocked out five tanks." Shepherd replied, "Well, Ned, we're just doing our job, that's all."

MacArthur climbed back into his jeep and the star-studded party drove on. Seven dazed North Korean soldiers crawled out from the culvert over which MacArthur's jeep had parked and meekly surrendered.

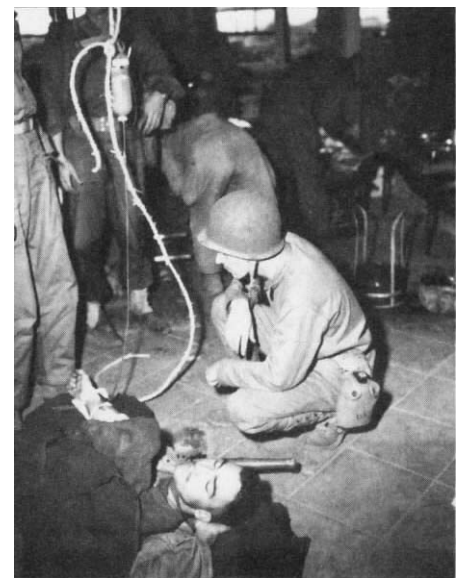
Next stop for MacArthur was the 5th Marines command post. MacArthur went to award Silver Stars to General Craig and Colonel Murray only to learn that his supply of medals was exhausted. "Make a note," he told his aide. The medals were delivered later.

MacArthur finished his tour with a visit to Green Beach at Wolmi-do, where unloading from the LSTs was progressing, and to see the occupants of the prisoner of war stockade—671 of them under guard of the 1st Marine Division's military police.

Ashore at Wolmi-do, MacArthur found evidence, to his great satis-

At a temporary aid station at Pier No. 2, designated Yellow Beach, a wounded Marine is given whole blood by a Navy corpsman. From this station, the wounded were evacuated to hospital ships off shore.

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC349024



Shepherd, Whitney, Wright, and Fox; a bodyguard bristling with weapons; and a large number of the press corps. A train of jeeps was hastily assembled and the party proceeded to the 1st Marine Division headquarters in a dirt-floored Quonset hut where Smith joined the party. MacArthur presented him a Silver Star medal.

MacArthur and his entourage then visited Puller at the 1st Marines' observation post. MacArthur climbed the hill. Puller put down his binoculars and the

two great actors shook hands. MacArthur gave Puller a Silver Star.

MacArthur's cavalcade next drove to the site of the still-smoking hulls of the dreaded North Korean T-34s that had counterattacked at dawn. Shepherd, looking at the still-burning T-34s, commented to Almond that they proved that "bazookas" could destroy tanks.

"You damned Marines!" snorted Almond. "You always seem to be in the right spot at the right time . . . MacArthur would arrive



Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348526

On the morning of 17 September, Gen MacArthur, surrounded by subordinates, bodyguards, and photographers, made a grand and much publicized tour of the Inchon beachhead. MacArthur is unmistakable in his crushed cap, sunglasses, and leather jacket. LtGen Lemuel C. Shepherd,

Jr., on the left, is in his usual khakis and carrying his trademark cocomacaque, or Haitian walking stick. MajGen O. P. Smith, in khaki fore-n-aft cap and canvas leggings, trudges along behind Shepherd.

Almost obscured by the jeep's windshield, a photographer peers through his lens at the command echelons of the Inchon landing during the 17 September visit. Gen MacArthur in hawk-like profile stares straight ahead.

MajGen O. P. Smith sits smiling in the middle of the rear seat, flanked on his right by MajGen Edward M. Almond and on his left by VAdm Arthur D. Struble. The unidentified Marine driver awaits instructions.

Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348522





Department of Defense Photo (USA) SC348516

FMFPac commander LtGen Lemuel C. Shepherd, VMI 1917, on the right, points out something significant to the X Corps commander, MajGen Edward M. Almond, VMI 1915, as they move by motor launch from the Mount McKinley to the beach. Shepherd, although relegated to the position of observer instead of corps commander, held no grudge against Almond.

Marine helicopters, fragile and few in number, were found useful in evacuating severely wounded Marines to hospital facilities to the rear or at sea. As the war progressed, more

suitable helicopters arrived and the practice became standard.

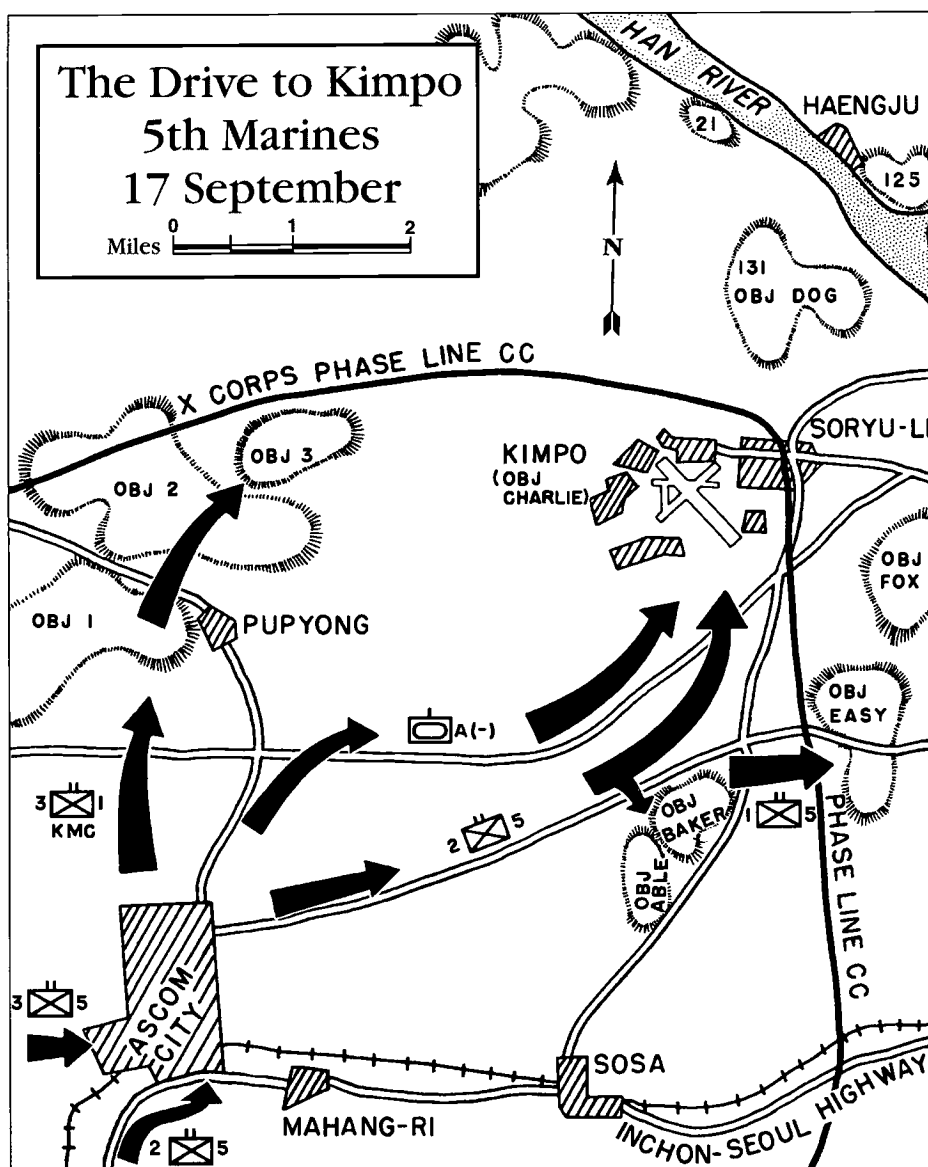
faction, that the enemy had begun an intensive fortification of the island. Later he pontificated: "Had I listened to those who wanted to delay the landing until the next high tides, nearly a month later, Wolmi-do would have been an impregnable fortress."

Almond, just before leaving with his boss to return to the *Mount McKinley*, informed Smith that Barr's 7th Infantry Division would begin landing the next day, coming in on the 1st Marine Division's right flank. Smith, returning to his command post, learned that Major General James M. Gavin, USA, of World War II airborne fame, had arrived to study the Marine Corps' use of close air support.

An airstrip was set up next to the division command post that same day, 17 September. After that, Gottschalk's VMO-6 flew a full schedule of observation, evacuation, liaison, and reconnaissance flights.

Photo by Frank Noel, Associated Press





Infantry Advances

The battle with the T-34s delayed for an hour the jump-off for the day's attacks. The next phase line was 19 miles long and Murray's 5th Marines had two-thirds of it. At 0700, the Korean Marines' 3d Battalion had passed through Roise's 2d Battalion to clean up the outskirts of Ascom City. Roise himself jumped off two hours later, Captain Jaskilka's Company E in the lead. The advance was to be in column and then a left turn into Ascom City.

Company E, joined by 2d Platoon, Company F, spent the morning in a methodical clearing

of the densely built-up area of little pockets of resistance. Roise found that the road on the map that was supposed to lead to his next objective, four miles distant, was nonexistent on the ground. The renewed advance did not get off until mid-afternoon.

The inexperienced 3d Battalion of the Korean Marines ran into trouble on the other side of Ascom City. Taplett's 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, in regimental reserve, moved in to help and efficiently knocked out the moderate resistance. Pomeroy came up with his platoon of M-26 tanks. Looking for Roise's 2d Battalion and, not finding the mythical road, he instead

found Taplett's 3d Battalion. Eventually, Pomeroy reached the 2d Battalion and a road that would lead to Kimpo Airfield now about five miles away. He was joined by his company commander, Captain Gearl M. English, and another platoon of tanks.

Meanwhile, Roise advanced to two high hills some 4,000 yards south of Kimpo. He launched his attack against the airfield with Companies D and E in the assault. They moved rapidly against nothing but light small arms fire. Captain English brought up his tanks to help, assigning a tank platoon to support each of the assault companies. By 1800, Roise's Marines were at the southern end of the main runway. Each of his three rifle companies curled into separate perimeters for the night. Lieutenant Deptula's 1st Platoon, Company E, was positioned well out to the front in the hamlet of Soryu-li as an outpost.

During the afternoon, Newton and the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, had moved up on Roise's right against no resistance. Taplett's 3d Battalion, having eased the situation for the Korean Marines, was two miles to the rear, again in regimental reserve.

With 1st Marines

Throughout the day, 17 September, Puller's 1st Marines had continued its advance. On the left flank Sutter, with the 2d Battalion, straddled the highway and moved forward behind an intermittent curtain of howitzer fire delivered by the 11th Marines. Essentially, Sutter was attacking due east from Mahang-ri to Sosa, two fair-sized villages. He deployed Company E on the left of the road, Company F on the right, and kept Company D in reserve. As the 5th Marines moved to the northeast toward



Department of Defense Photo (USMC)

When not moving from hill to hill, the Marines frequently found themselves attacking across flat rice paddies. Ironically, Kimpo, in addition to having the best airfield in Korea, was also known for growing the best rice.

Kimpo, a considerable gap widened between the two regiments.

North Korean resistance thickened as Sutter neared Sosa. Puller ordered Ridge to move the 3d Battalion up on Sutter's right flank. Ridge decided again to use amphibian tractors as personnel carriers. Westover's Company G clanked up the road behind the 2d Platoon, Company B tanks, under Second Lieutenant Brian J. Cummings. In a defile, some brave North Koreans tried to stop Cummings' M-26s with grenades. The advance on the road stalled. Company G got up on the high side of the defile to the right of the road. With Sutter's battalion on the left, the Marines had a converging "turkey shoot" and broke up the North Korean attack. Sutter and Ridge dug in for the night, each battalion on its own side of the defile. To their south, Hawkins' 1st Battalion and Houghton's Reconnaissance Company had cleared up Namdong Peninsula. The night would pass quietly for the 1st Marines.

To the rear, Inchon was in a

shambles. Most of the city officials had fled before the North Korean capture of the city. Fortunately, Admiral Sohn Won Yil, the chief of naval operations of the ROK Navy,

Shore party operations followed close behind the assault waves and within a few days, stocks of ammunition, rations, and other supplies had reached the level needed for the drive to Seoul and its capture.

Photo by Frank Noel, Associated Press



had come ashore to observe the operations of the Korean Marine Regiment. (He also received a MacArthur Silver Star.) Sohn picked a temporary mayor who was installed on the morning of 18 September by authority of a 1st Marine Division proclamation.

5th Marines Takes Kimpo

The night of 17-18 September was tense for the 5th Marines. Murray was certain that the North Koreans would not give up Kimpo, the best airfield in Korea, without a fight, and he was right. The airfield was under the apparent command of a Chinese-trained brigadier general, Wan Yong. The garrison, nominally the NKPA 1st Air Force Division, was in truth a patchwork of bits and pieces of several regiments, with not more than a few hundred effectives.

The North Koreans went against Roise's well dug-in battalion in



Department of Defense Photo (USN) 420271

Fumigation and bath platoons would arrive later, but during the assault phase of the Inchon operation Marines seized the opportunity to clean up when and where they could. Helmets made convenient washbasins.

three badly coordinated attacks. The first hit Deptula's outpost at about 0300 in the morning, the Communists using rifles and machine pistols, backed by a T-34 tank. Deptula skillfully fought off four half-hearted assaults and by 0500 had withdrawn successfully to Company E's main line of resistance.

The second attack came from both the west and east against Jaskilka's Company E. The third attack hit Harrell's Company F further to the south. Both attacks were easily contained. The routed enemy fled toward the Han River.

At daylight Roise jumped off in pursuit. His Marines swept across the airfield, securing it and its surrounding villages by 1000. Companies E and F mopped up and Company D went on to take Hill 131 overlooking the Han. In 24 hours of fighting, Roise had lost four Marines killed and 19 wounded. His Marines had taken 10 pris-

oners and had counted about 100 enemy dead.

1st Marines Advances

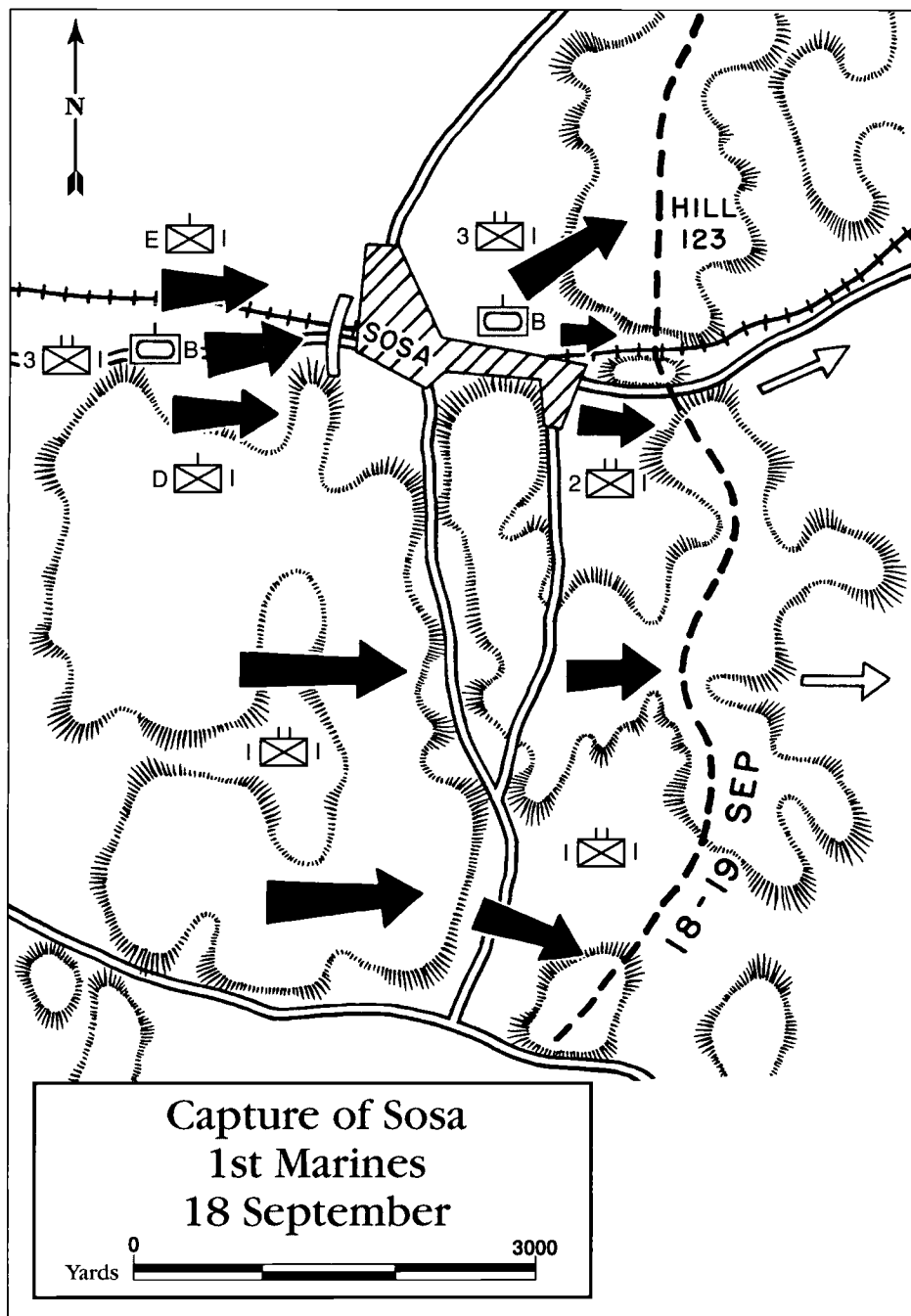
In the 1st Marines' zone of action, Ridge, with the 3d Battalion outside of Sosa, decided that the center of North Korean resistance must be on Hill 123. During the night he called for naval gunfire. HMS *Kenya*, Captain P. W. Brock commanding, delivered some 300 rounds of 6-inch shells somewhere between Sosa and Hill 123. Ridge's naval gunfire spotter was not sure where they impacted, but Ridge, in the interest of inter-allied cordiality, sent Captain Brock a "well done."

At dawn Sutter charged ahead astride the Seoul highway, Company E on the left of the road and Company D on the right. Premature airbursts on the part of his artillery preparatory fires cost him

Correspondents and photographers examine a Russian-built Yak fighter in a destroyed hanger at Kimpo Airfield. Captured by the 2d Battalion, 5th Marines, Marine engineers quickly made the airfield operative and ready to receive elements of MAG-33.

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC349036





were with the red-orange scars of shell holes and trench lines, was over. The war was getting serious.

Sutter's 2d Battalion, meanwhile, went straight ahead, left flank on the railroad tracks, into a defensive position about a mile beyond Sosa. A barrage of mortar shells cost him 14 casualties. Hawkins' 1st Battalion continued advancing on the right and for the third straight day encountered nothing but a few rifle shots.

Kimpo Airfield Becomes Operational

Murray displaced his command post forward from Ascom City to Kimpo. His regiment spent a quiet day sending patrols around the airfield. The field was in relatively good shape. A North Korean Soviet-built Yakovlev Yak-3 fighter and two Ilyushin "Shturmovik" attack aircraft were found in near-flyable condition.

The first aircraft to land at Kimpo was a Marine H03S-1 helicopter. It arrived at 1000 that morning, 18 September, piloted by Captain Victor A. Armstrong of VMO-6 and with General Shepherd and Colonel Krulak as passengers. General Craig who had just arrived by jeep met them.

Captain George W. King's Company A, 1st Engineer Battalion, made the field operational with temporary repairs. Generals Harris and Cushman came in by helicopter that afternoon. On their advice, General Almond authorized the establishment of Marine Aircraft Group 33 (MAG-33) on the field.

Corsairs began to arrive the next day. Harris set up the headquarters of his Tactical Air Command. Two Corsair squadrons, VMF-312 and VMF-212, came in. Night fighter squadron VMF(N)-542, under Lieutenant Colonel Max J.

two killed and three wounded.

Behind the 2d Battalion, Ridge mounted up the 3d Battalion in a motorized column made up of a mixture of jeeps, amphibian tractors (LVTs), and amphibious trucks (DUKWs). Corsairs from VMF-214 worked over Sosa, sighted six T-34s beyond the town, and knocked out two of them. Ridge thundered ahead in a cloud of dust behind the tanks of Company B, 1st Tank Battalion. Together they brushed aside some light resis-

tance, including an antitank roadblock. By noon Ridge had cleared the town. His battalion then swung to the left off the road and moved up Hill 123 while his naval gunfire spotter continued to look for some evidence as to where the *Kenya's* shells might have hit. The 3d Battalion was barely on the hill and not yet dug in when a barrage of North Korean 120mm mortar shells drenched their position causing 30 casualties. The romp over the green hills, marred as they



National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A3727

1stLt John V. Hanes flew in first Marine Corsair to land at Kimpo Airfield. Having taken hits while on a bombing mission, Hanes was grateful that there was a friendly airfield on which to land. BGen Thomas J. Cushman, Assistant Wing Commander of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, greets him.

Volcansek, Jr., arrived from Japan. There was a paper shuffle of squadrons between Marine Aircraft Groups 12 and 33. Marine Aircraft Group 33 under Brigadier General Thomas J. Cushman was now in business ashore. MAG-12 picked up the squadrons afloat. VMFs 214 and 323 continued to operate from the *Sicily* and *Badoeng Strait*, and the night-fighters of VMF(N)-513 from their base at Itazuke in Japan.

Reinforcements Arrive

On Murray's left the 2d KMC Battalion joined the 1st KMC Battalion. The ROK Army's 17th Regiment landed at Inchon and, temporarily under 1st Marine Division control was given an initial mission of completing the clean-up of the unswept area between Ascom City and the sea.

Almond, pressing forward, conferred with Smith on the morning of 18 September concerning the readiness of the 1st Marine Division to cross the Han. Smith pointed out that the 7th Division

must take over its zone of action and free his right flank so he could concentrate his forces to cross the river. Smith already had it in his mind that the 5th Marines would go over first to be followed by the 1st Marines. His 7th Marines was still at sea. He went forward to Kimpo to discuss the matter with Murray.

The first unit of the 7th Division, the 32d Infantry, landed, as promised on the 18th, was attached temporarily to the 1st Marine Division. Smith relayed Almond's orders to the 32d to relieve the 1st Marines on the right flank and then to operate in the zone of action assigned to the 7th Division.

7th Division Becomes Operational

On the morning of 19 September, General Barr established his 7th Division's command post ashore. Almond called Barr and Smith together at the 1st Marine Division command post to discuss the 7th Division's immedi-

ate assumption of what had been the 1st Marines' zone of action south of the Inchon-Seoul highway.

The 31st Infantry had begun landing. The 32d Infantry would be detached from the 1st Marine Division at 1800. With these two regiments Barr was to begin operations. Smith would then be able to side-slip Puller's regiment fully to the left of the Seoul highway.

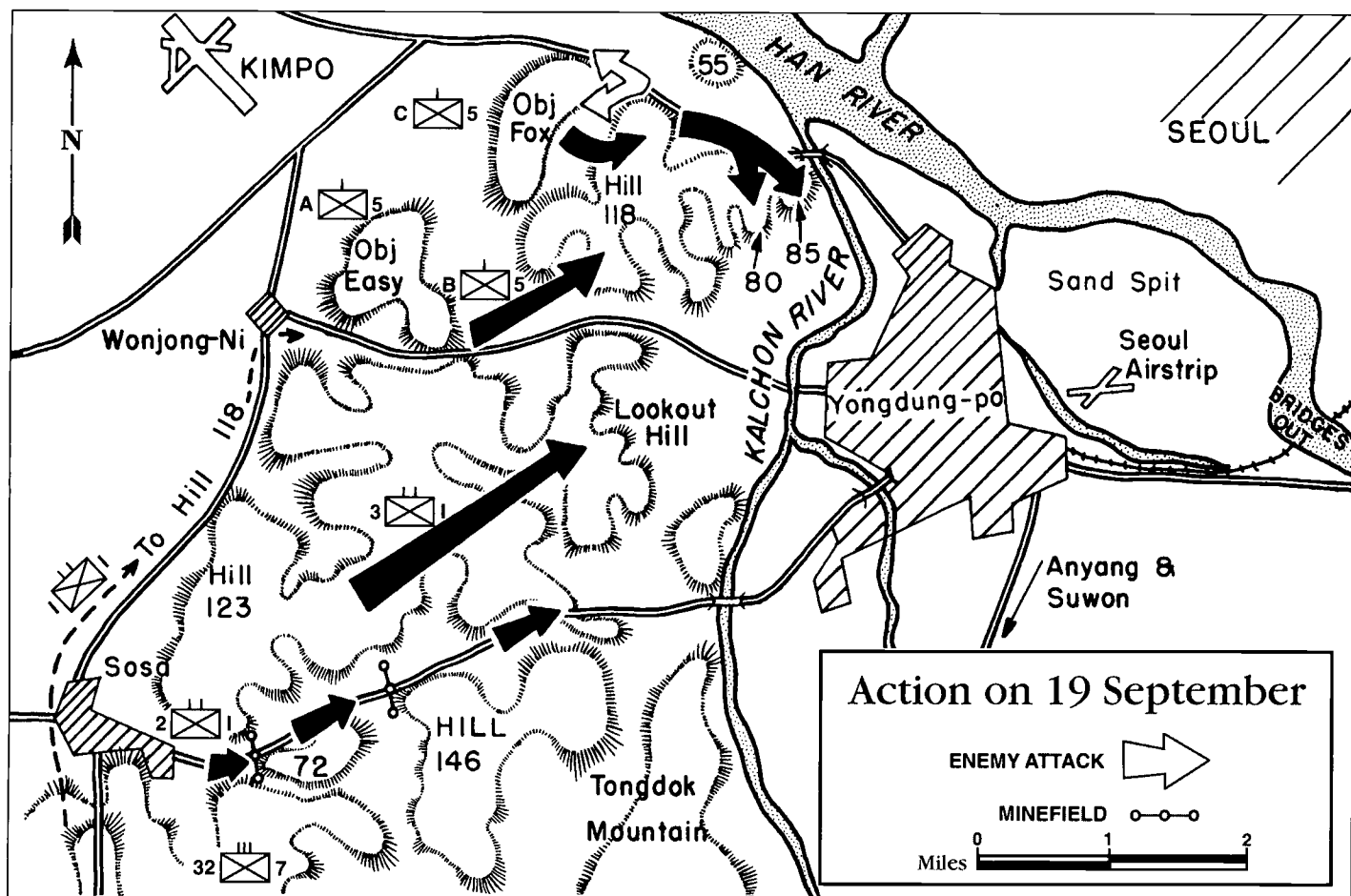
Almond's aide, Lieutenant Haig, who was a fly on the tent wall at these meetings, observed that "the Marines' respect for the 7th Division at this stage of the war was ostentatiously low."

Advancing to the Han

After that meeting, the peripatetic Almond went on to visit the command posts of both the 32d Infantry and the 1st Marines. He then proceeded to the 5th Marines command post on Kimpo Airfield to discuss with Murray the crossing of the Han that was scheduled for the following day. Murray told him that he planned to cross in column of battalions using amphibian tractors, amphibious trucks, and pontoon floats at a ferry crossing site northeast of Kimpo.

A significant range of hills separated the 5th Marines on Kimpo from Yongdung-po and the Han. During the night of 18-19 September, Murray had ordered Newton forward with the 1st Battalion to seize Hill 118 and then Hills 80 and 85, overlooking the Kalchon River near where it joined the Han.

At dawn, before Newton could move out, a company-sized North Korean force attacked Company C behind a shower of mortar shells. While Company C slaughtered the North Koreans, "Ike" Fenton's Company B moved against Hill 118. There was the usual air and



artillery preparation before the jump-off, and Company B took the peak of Hill 118 without suffering a single casualty. The trapped attacking North Koreans lost perhaps 300 dead (there is always optimism in the count of enemy dead) and 100 prisoners. Company C lost two killed and six wounded.

To the 5th Marines' right, Ridge's 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, with Companies H and I in the assault, moved off Hill 123 toward Lookout Hill, so-called because it gave a good view of the Kalchon and the town of Yongdung-po beyond. Official historians Montross and Canzona called the attack, which cost two killed and 15 wounded, "too successful," because it put Ridge's battalion well out in front of the 5th Marines on his left and Sutter's 2d Battalion on his right.

Sutter's battalion was advancing along the Seoul highway behind

Captain Richard M. Taylor's Company C tanks and had gone little more than a quarter-mile when the lead M-26 hit a box mine that blew off a track and two road wheels. The antitank barrier of mines was formidable. The whole column came to a stop. Small-arms fire smashed in from neighboring Hill 72. The 11th Marines, the division's artillery regiment, took Hill 72 under howitzer fire. Corsairs from ever-ready VMF-214 came to help. A platoon of engineers under First Lieutenant George A. Babe blew up the box mines with "snowball" charges of C-3 plastic explosive. Sutter used all three of his rifle companies to uncover the minefield and force his way through. His infantry went forward a mile into heavy fighting around Hill 146 while the tanks waited on the side of the road. A second minefield was encountered, and

more work by the engineers was needed. At 1900, Sutter ordered his battalion to dig in. His Marines had advanced nearly three miles at a cost of four killed and 18 wounded. Yongdung-po was still more than two miles in front of him.

Smith moved his command post forward the afternoon of 19 September to a site Craig selected about a mile and a half southeast of Kimpo; it had been used for U.S. dependents housing during the occupation. From here Smith was within easy jeep or helicopter distance of his front-line units. The abandoned Quonset huts were near ideal except for occasional harassment apparently by a single NKPA gun. The backbone for the perimeter defense around the command post was provided by a section of the Division Band trained as a machine gun platoon.

The 32d Infantry, now detached

from the division, was somewhere to Sutter's right rear. The Army battalion that relieved Hawkins' battalion had spent the day mopping up rather than continuing the attack.

Hawkins' 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, was on its way to relieve Newton's 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, an 11-mile motor march from the division's right flank.

Captain Robert H. Barrow's Company A, 1st Marines, was the first to reach Hill 118 and relieve Fenton's Company B, 5th Marines.

Company C, 1st Marines, was to replace Company C, 5th Marines, on Hills 80 and 85. Newton was anxious to pull back his 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, to Kimpo to get ready for the river crossing the next day, and it was almost dark

when Hawkins reached him. Company C, 1st Marines, under Captain Robert P. Wray, had not yet arrived.

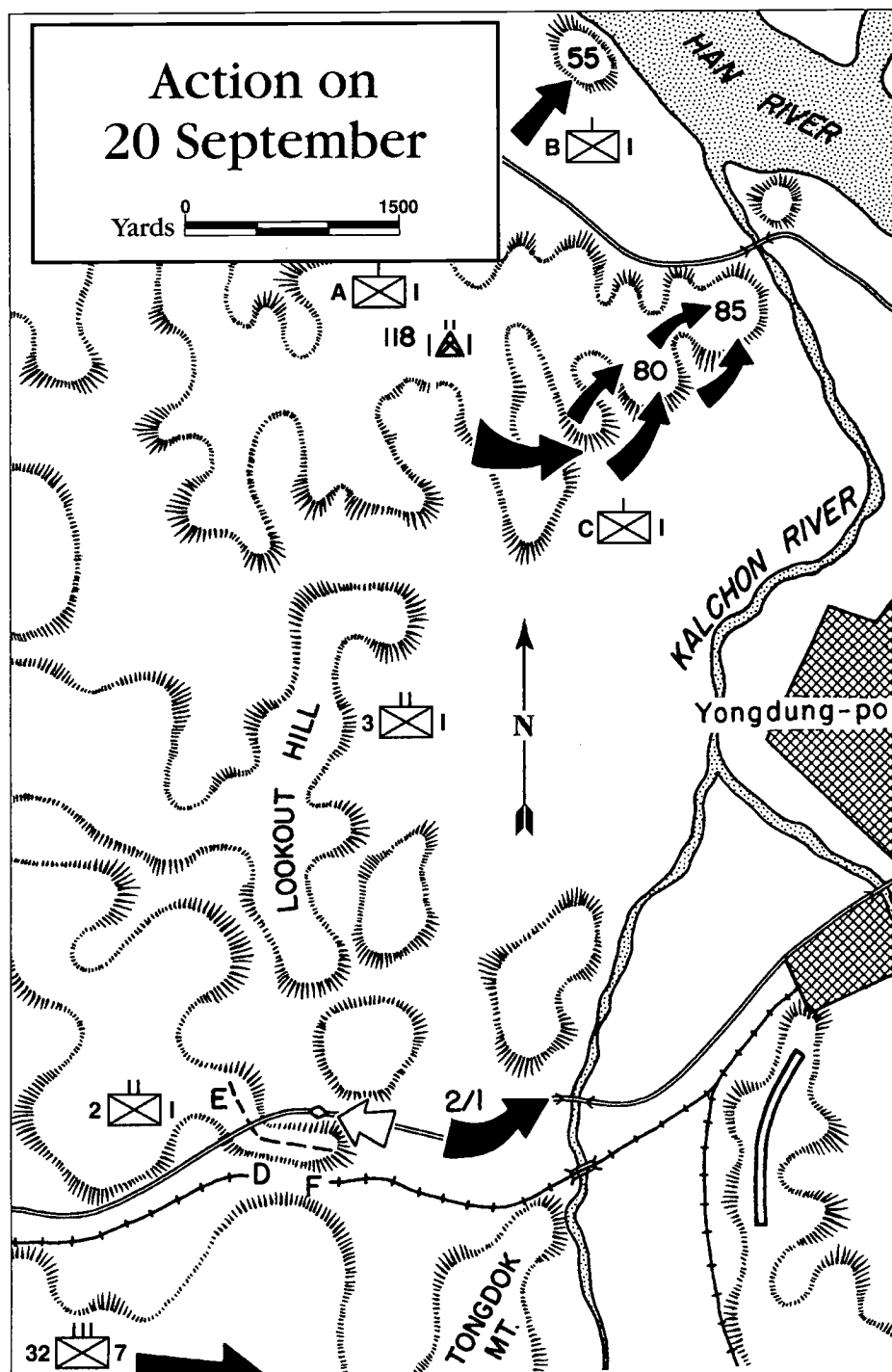
Barrow, a tall Louisianian and a future Marine Commandant, realized the tactical importance of Hills 80 and 85 and radioed for permission to move Company A forward to the two hills. Permission was denied. Newton made it known that he would pull Company C off the hills no later than 2100. Wray's Company C did not reach Hill 118 until 2200; Hills 80 and 85 were left empty.

Confused Day

Before dawn the next day, 20 September, Hawkins' Marines on Hill 118 heard the North Koreans assault the empty hills. Then they came on in company-sized strength in a futile attack against the entrenched Marines on Hill 118.

Meanwhile, shortly before dawn a battalion-sized North Korean force, led by five T-34 tanks followed by an ammunition truck, came down the Seoul highway against Sutter's 2d Battalion, 1st Marines. Companies D and E held positions on each side of the road. The column roared through the gap between them and hit head-on against Company F's support position. The North Koreans were caught in a sleeve. Companies D and E poured fire into their flanks. Howitzer fire by the 2d and 4th Battalions, 11th Marines, sealed in the entrapped North Korean column. "A fortunate grenade was dropped in the enemy ammunition truck and offered some illumination," noted the 2d Battalion's Special Action Report, "enabling two tanks to be destroyed by 3.5" rocket fire."

The rocket gunner was Private First Class Monegan, the tank-killer



Private First Class Walter C. Monegan, Jr.

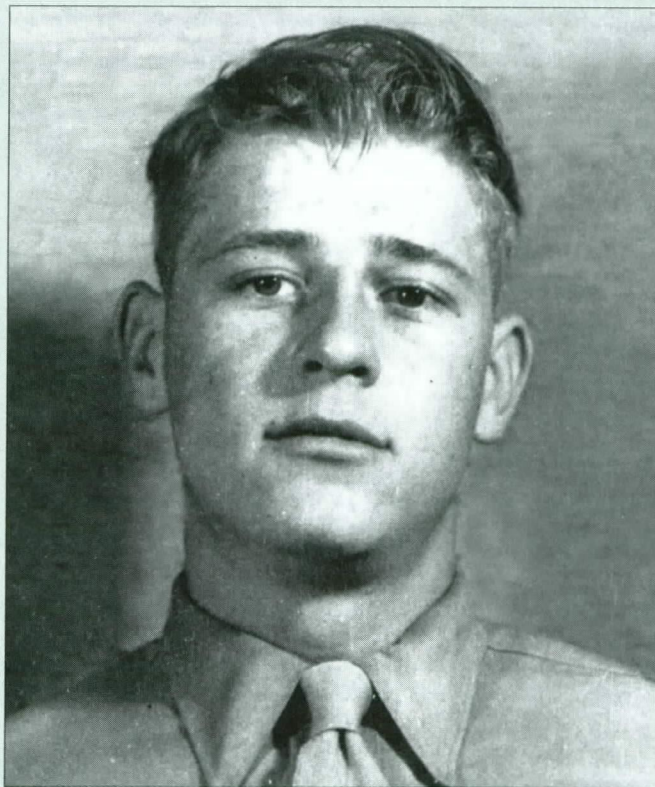
Nineteen-year-old Walter Monegan in five days of action fought two battles against North Korean T-34 tanks, won them both, and lost his own life.

Born on Christmas Day 1930, he could not wait until his 17th birthday, enlisting in the Army in November 1947. The Army discovered he was underage and promptly sent him home. He tried again on 22 March 1948, enlisting in the Marine Corps. After recruit training at Parris Island in June he was sent to China to join the 3d Marines at Tsingtao. After a year in China he came home, was stationed at Camp Pendleton for a year, and then was sent to Marine Barracks, Naval Air Station, Seattle. He had barely re-enlisted in July 1950 when he was ordered to return to Camp Pendleton to join the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, then being formed.

His remains, buried temporarily at Inchon, were returned home and re-interred in Arlington National Cemetery on 19 July 1951. His wife, Elizabeth C. Monegan, holding their infant child, Walter III, received his posthumous Medal of Honor from Secretary of the Navy Dan Kimball, on 8 February 1952.

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Rocket Gunner attached to Company F, Second Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces near Sosa-ri, Korea, on 17 and 20 September 1950. Dug in a hill overlooking the main Seoul highway when six enemy tanks threatened to break through the Battalion position during a pre-dawn attack on 17 September, Private First Class Monegan promptly moved forward with his bazooka under heavy hostile automatic weapons fire and engaged the lead tank at a range of less than 50 yards. After scoring a direct hit and killing the sole surviving tankman with his carbine as he came through the escape hatch, he boldly fired two more rounds of ammunition at the oncoming tanks, disorganizing the attack and enabling our tank crews to continue blasting with their 90-mm guns. With his own and an adjacent company's position threatened by annihilation when an overwhelming enemy tank-infantry force by-passed the area and proceeded toward the bat-



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A45432

talion Command Post during the early morning of September 20, he seized his rocket launcher and, in total darkness, charged down the slope of the hill where the tanks had broken through. Quick to act when an illuminating shell hit the area, he scored a direct hit on one of the tanks as hostile rifle and automatic weapons fire raked the area at close range. Again exposing himself he fired another round to destroy a second tank and, as the rear tank turned to retreat, stood upright to fire and was fatally struck down by hostile machine-gun fire when another illuminating shell silhouetted him against the sky. Private First Class Monegan's daring initiative, gallant fighting spirit and courageous devotion to duty were contributing factors in the success of his company in repelling the enemy and his self-sacrificing efforts throughout sustain and enhance the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

of Soryu-li. He slid down the slope from Company F with his 3.5-inch rocket launcher and knocked out the first and second tanks. Machine gun fire killed him as he took aim on the third T-34. His family would receive a posthumous Medal of

Honor. A third T-34 was captured intact. Sutter's battalion claimed 300 enemy dead. Half an hour after breaking up the North Korean attack, the 2d Battalion moved forward in its own attack.

Yongdung-po was drenched

that day with shell-fire. Puller moved to align his regiment for the assault of the town. Hawkins was to take Hills 80 and 85. Sutter was to advance to the first of two highway bridges crossing the Kalchon. Ridge was to stay in

reserve on Lookout Hill.

Hawkins sent out Captain Wray with Company C to capture Hills

80 and 85, that had been free for the taking, the day before. Wray, covered by the 81mm mortars and

Browning water-cooled machine guns of Major William L. Bates, Jr.'s Weapons Company, made a text-

Second Lieutenant Henry A. Commiskey

Lieutenant Commiskey was no stranger to war. As an enlisted Marine he had been wounded at Iwo Jima and received a letter of commendation for "exhibiting high qualities of leadership and courage in the face of a stubborn and fanatical enemy."

Born in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, in 1927, he had joined the Marine Corps two days after his 17th birthday. He served more than five years as an enlisted man and was a staff sergeant drill instructor at Parris Island when he was selected for officer training in 1949. He completed this training in June 1950. Two months later he was with the 1st Marines and on his way to Korea.

He came from a family of fighters. His father had been a machine gun instructor in World War I. One brother had been with the Marine Raiders in World War II. Another brother was badly wounded while with the 187th Airborne Infantry in Korea.

In the action on 20 September, that gained Henry Commiskey the nation's highest award for valor, he escaped unscathed, but a week later he was slightly wounded in the fight for Seoul and on 8 December seriously wounded in the knee at the Chosin Reservoir. Sent home for hospitalization, he recovered and went to Pensacola in September 1951 for flight training, receiving his wings in June 1953 and then qualifying as a jet pilot.

He returned to Korea in April 1954 as a pilot with VMA-212. Coming home in September, he returned to line duty at his own request and was assigned once more to the 1st Marine Division. Next assignment was in 1956 to Jackson, Mississippi, close to his birthplace, for three years duty as a recruiter. In 1959, now a major, he went to the Amphibious Warfare School, Junior Course, at Quantico, and stayed on as an instructor at the Basic School. He retired from active duty in 1966 to Meridian, Mississippi, and died of a self-inflicted gunshot wound on 15 August 1971.

Citation:

For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity at the risk of his life above and beyond the call of duty while serving as a Platoon Leader in Company C, First Battalion, First Marines, First Marine Division (Reinforced), in action against enemy aggressor forces near Yongdungp'o, Korea, on 20 September 1950. Directed to attack hostile forces well dug in on Hill 85, First Lieutenant Commiskey, then Second Lieutenant, spearheaded the assault, charging up the steep slopes on the run. Coolly disregarding the heavy enemy machine-gun and small-arms fire, he plunged on well forward of the rest of



Department of Defense Photo (USMC) A43766

his platoon and was the first man to reach the crest of the objective. Armed only with a pistol, he jumped into a hostile machine-gun emplacement occupied by five enemy troops and quickly disposed of four of the soldiers with his automatic pistol. Grappling with the fifth, First Lieutenant Commiskey knocked him to the ground and held him until he could obtain a weapon from another member of his platoon and kill the last of the enemy gun crew. Continuing his bold assault, he moved to the next emplacement, killed two or more of the enemy and then led his platoon toward the rear nose of the hill to rout the remainder of the hostile troops and destroy them as they fled from their positions. His valiant leadership and courageous fighting spirit served to inspire the men of his company to heroic endeavor in seizing the objective and reflect the highest credit upon First Lieutenant Commiskey and the United States Naval Service.



On 20 September, as the loading continues, an LST, beached until the next high tide comes in, has discharged its cargo.

Department of Defense Photo (USN) 80-G-426159
The small landing craft to the right are a 36-foot LCVP and two 50-foot LCMs.

book double envelopment of Hill 80 against stubborn resistance. The 1st Platoon, under Second Lieutenant William A. Craven, came in on the left. Second

Lieutenant Henry A. Commiskey came in on the right with the 3d Platoon. Together they took Hill 80. The day was almost done but Wray went on against Hill 85,

repeating his double envelopment. Craven set up a base of fire with his platoon on the northern slope of Hill 80. Second Lieutenant John N. Guild went forward on the left

Amphibious trucks, "ducks" to Marines, are readied at Inchon to be moved up for use in crossing the Han River. The division was well supported by the versatile trucks of the

1st Amphibian Truck Company, an element of the 1st Motor Transport Battalion.

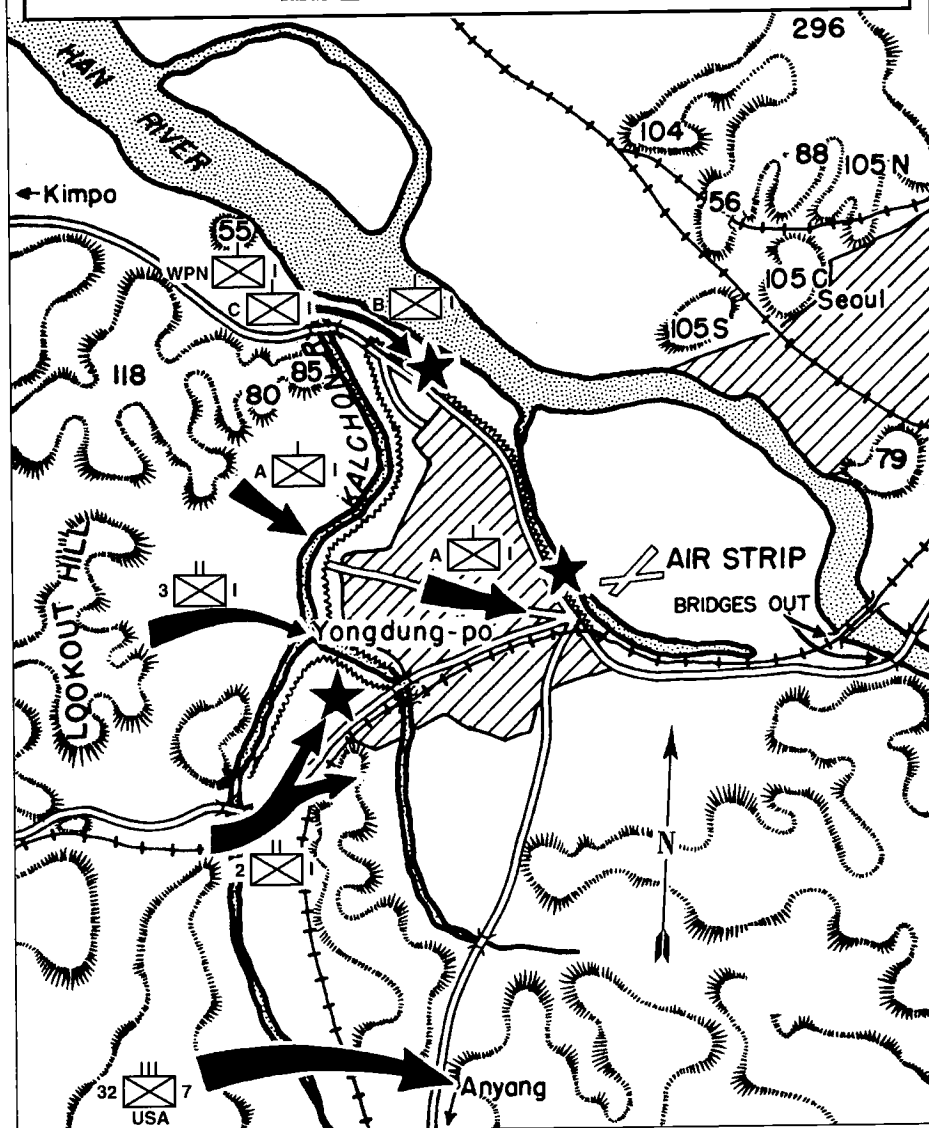
National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC348700



Assault of Yongdung-po 1st Marines 21 September

★ Main Marine Positions at Day's End ~~~~~ Dike

0 2000 4000
Yards



with his 2d Platoon and got almost to the top of the hill before being mortally wounded. Commiskey went out in front of his 3d Platoon in a one-man assault that earned him a Medal of Honor.

While Wray worked at capturing Hills 80 and 85, Hawkins' command group and Barrow's Marines watched as spectators from Hill 118. They saw to their left front, to their horror, a tracked "Weasel" with a wire party from the 1st

Signal Battalion hit a mine on the approach to a bridge across the Kalchon near where it joined the Han. In full sight of Hill 118, two Marine wiremen were taken prisoner. A truck from Company A, 1st Engineers, with a driver and three passengers, unaware of the fate of the communicators, now came along the road. Barrow tried to catch their attention with rifle fire over their heads, but the truck continued into the ambush. Three

engineers got away; one, Private First Class Clayton O. Edwards, was captured. (He would later escape from a train taking prisoners into North Korea.)

Meanwhile, Sutter's 2d Battalion, having begun the day by breaking up the T-34 tank-led North Korean attack, had moved forward uneventfully, except for harassing fire from their open right flank. They reached their day's objective, the highway bridge over the Kalchon, shortly after noon. The bridge was a long concrete span. The engineers inspected it and certified it strong enough to bear M-26 Pershing tanks for next day's attack into Yongdung-po itself. The second bridge, crossing a tributary of the Kalchon, lay 2,000 yards ahead. A high ridge, seemingly teeming with North Korean defenders, to the right of the road dominated the bridge. Sutter's neighbor on his right was Lieutenant Colonel Charles M. Mount, USA, with the 2d Battalion, 32d Infantry. The ridge commanding the second bridge was technically in Mount's zone of action. At 1300, Sutter asked Mount for permission to fire against the ridge. Mount readily agreed, but it took seven hours to get the fire mission cleared through the layers of regimental and division staffs and approved by X Corps. It was dark before Colonel Brower's 11th Marines was allowed to fire.

During the day, General Almond visited Colonel Puller at the 1st Marines' command post. Almond admired Puller's aggressive tactics and there was also a Virginia Military Institute connection. Puller, saying he could not reach Smith either by wire or radio, asked permission to burn Yongdung-po before committing his troops to its capture. Almond authorized its burning.

Almond's habit of visiting the

Marine regiments and issuing orders directly to subordinate commanders had become a serious aggravation to Smith. A division order went out that any direct order received from Almond would be immediately relayed to division headquarters for ratification.

Ready to Cross the Han

The shelling of Yongdung-po, now blazing with fires, continued throughout the night. Puller's plan of attack for the 1st Marines on 21 September was to have the 2d Battalion continue its advance astride the Inchon-Seoul highway.

The 1st Battalion on the left would attack across country and the 3d Battalion, occupying Lookout Hill, would initially stay in reserve.

During the previous day, Captain Richard L. Bland had occupied Hill 55 overlooking the Han with Company B, 1st Marines. Now, shortly after dawn, he took his company across the bridge that had been the site of the ambush of the Marine communicators and engineers. In late afternoon, Hawkins sent Company C and Weapons Company across the bridge to join with Company B to form a perimeter for the night.

During the day, Ridge's 3d Battalion, in reserve on Lookout

Hill, had grown impatient and had come forward prematurely, getting out in front of both the 1st and 2d Battalions. Its prospective assault companies, Companies G and I, reached and huddled behind the dike on the western bank of the Kalchon close to a water gate where a tributary entered into the main stream. This put them in good position to watch the approach march of Barrow's Company A to the Kalchon.

With Bland's Company B stalled on the opposite bank of the Kalchon, Hawkins had committed Company A to an attack from its positions on Hill 80 across a mile of rice paddies to the river. Barrow

Following a burst of sniper fire, Marines quickly take cover along a dike near the Han River. So far, the Marines had suffered only light casualties, while the North Koreans had lost heavily.

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC349026





National Archives Photo (USMC) 127-N-A3610

Marines of Capt Robert H. Barrow's Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, move into Yongdung-po. Although the town seemed empty and dead, they carefully searched each building and side street but failed to uncover a flicker of enemy resistance.

deployed his platoons in a classic two-up one-back formation. As they came forward through the waist-high rice straw, a 3d Battalion officer, watching from his position behind the dike, was reminded of the stories he had been told of the Marines advancing through the wheat into Belleau Wood. Without a shot being fired, Company A waded the stream and marched into Yongdung-po. Barrow radioed Hawkins for instructions. Hawkins told him to keep on going.

The crossing of the Kalchon by Ridge's 3d Battalion was less easy. Going over the dike was eerily like going "over the top" of the trenches in the First World War. Second Lieutenant Spencer H. Jarnagin of Company G formed his platoon in

line on the near side of the dike close to the water gate. At his whistle signal they started across. As they came out of the defilade provided by the dike, Maxim heavy machine guns on the opposite dike, perhaps 50 yards distant, opened up. Jarnagin fell back dead. His platoon recoiled, some of them wounded. Denied artillery support and with his 81mm mortars lacking ammunition, the battalion's Weapons Company commander called up his platoon of six water-cooled Browning machine guns.

During the rapid cross-country movement toward Seoul the heavy machine guns were initially attached by section to the rifle companies. They could not keep up with the light machine guns nor

did the rifle company commanders fully understand their capabilities. Consequently they were pulled back to company control and employed in battery for overhead fire in the attack. Now, in this situation so much like the Western Front, they would come into their own.

With their barrels just clearing the top of the dike, the Brownings engaged the Maxims, just as they had done in 1918, and it was the Brownings that won. The 3d Battalion then crossed the Kalchon at the water gate, Westover's Company G to the left of the tributary, First Lieutenant Joseph Fisher's Company I to the right.

Early that morning Sutter's battalion crossed the second bridge without incident except for fire

that continued to come in from across the boundary separating the 1st Marine Division from the 7th Infantry Division. Frustrated by the lack of artillery support, Sutter seized the bit in his teeth and shelled the offending ridge with his attached 4.2-inch mortars before sending up Companies E and F to take the high ground. While they were so engaged, Captain Welby W. Cronk took Company D along the highway and ran into another section of heavily fortified dike. Heavy fighting, supported by the ever-willing Corsairs of VMF-214, continued in Sutter's zone until late in the evening, when Sutter recalled Companies E and F to tuck them into a battalion perimeter for the night.

In Yongdung-po, Barrow could hear the furious firefight being waged by Sutter's battalion somewhere to his right. Crossing the town against scattered opposition Barrow reached yet another dike. Beyond it was a sandy flat reaching about a mile to the Han. To his left rear was Bland's Company B. Barrow dug in on the dike in a sausage-shaped perimeter. At nightfall, the Marines of Company A heard the characteristic chugging clatter of advancing tanks. Five T-34s, without infantry escort, came up the Inchon-Seoul highway and pumped steel into the western face of Company A's position. Barrow's 3.5-inch rocket gunners knocked out one and damaged two others.

Almond had been returning each evening to the *Mount McKinley*, but on the morning of 21 September he moved the headquarters of X Corps ashore and opened his command post in Inchon.

MacArthur came ashore again that afternoon enroute to Japan. A pride of generals—Almond,

Shepherd, Smith, Barr, Harris, and Lowe—had gathered at Kimpo Airfield to see him off. Mutual congratulations were exchanged, and MacArthur flew to Tokyo. "He was, in my opinion, the greatest military leader of our century," mused General Shepherd, the Virginia gentleman, in 1967.

Later that day, in a ceremony at X Corps headquarters in Inchon and in accordance with established amphibious doctrine, overall command of the operation passed

from Admiral Struble to General Almond.

By midnight, five infantry assaults against Barrow's position had followed the attack by the T-34s. All were beaten back, the heaviest fighting being in front of Second Lieutenant John J. Swords' 3d Platoon.

Pause in the Fighting

When the morning of 22 September came, Barrow's Marines

Gen Douglas MacArthur and MajGen Edward M. Almond examine a map at Kimpo Airfield shortly before the general's departure for Japan. MacArthur would tell the Joint Chiefs of Staff that "his forces were pounding at the gates of Seoul."

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC349084





National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC349054

Navy Hospital Corpsmen Richard E. Rosegroom and Frank J. Yasso, assigned to the 1st Marine Division, give first aid to a wounded North Korean while another prisoner is marched to the rear. While always there for Marines, corpsmen also

were available to treat prisoners of war and Korean civilians; the latter were second in number only to the Marines themselves.

were able to count 275 enemy dead. The four remaining T-34s, two damaged, two intact, were found abandoned nearby. The 1st and 3d Battalions renewed their attack and converged on Barrow's position against negligible resistance.

Sutter was not the only commander to complain about the fire control problems along the boundary between the two divisions. The 7th Division reported Marine Corps fire falling in its zone. Almond met with Barr and Smith and then told his aide, Lieutenant Haig, to telephone Corps headquarters and straighten out the situation.

Almond, continuing his critique of the Marines' performance, expressed his concern over Smith's "open" left flank. Smith explained to Almond his use of the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment, also that he had formed a Kimpo Airfield defense force, using combat support and service units. Almond appeared somewhat mollified.

The Korean Marines, leaving one battalion behind in Inchon, had followed the 5th Marines to Kimpo Airfield, and made its first attack northwest of the airfield on 19 September against light resistance. That same day the battalion

from Inchon rejoined its parent regiment. Now, with one battalion to be left behind to cover the northwest flank, the KMC regiment prepared to follow the 5th Marines across the Han.

Smith's third organic infantry regiment, the 7th Marines, including the battalion that had come from the Mediterranean by way of the Suez Canal, had arrived in the harbor. Colonel Homer Litzenberg asked General Smith what element he wanted landed first. "An infantry battalion," said Smith. "And what next?" "Another infantry battalion."

Litzenberg opened his command

post two miles south of Kimpo. His 3d Battalion, under Major Maurice E. Roach, moved into an assembly area nearby. The 1st Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel Thornton M. Hinkle, reached Hill 131 a mile north of the airfield sometime after midnight. The 1st Battalion, under Lieutenant Colonel Raymond G. Davis, stayed in the harbor to unload the ships that had brought in the regiment.

Smith made a note in his journal that Almond's concerns over open flanks had increased now that X Corps' command post was ashore. With the arrival of the 7th Marines, Smith himself could rest more easily concerning the security of his northwest flank.

Coordination between the 1st Marine Division and the 7th Division continued to be poor. An extensive minefield delayed the 32d Infantry as it attacked along the Seoul-Suwon highway on 20 September, but on that same day the 32d did take T'ongdok mountain and a part of Copper Mine Hill. The rest of Copper Mine Hill was taken the next day and, as night fell, the Army regiment held a line two miles south of Anyangni. The big event of 22 September for the 32d Infantry was the capture of Suwon Airfield and opening it to friendly traffic.

Sutter's 2d Battalion reverted to regimental reserve the afternoon of 22 September after seven days

in the assault. His grimy Marines gathered together in a bivouac area where they could wash and rest. The 22 September entry in Almond's war diary, dutifully kept by Haig, noted that Sutter's battalion had taken 116 casualties as "the result of aggressive forward movement without the required artillery preparation." That evening, Almond, after a busy day, entertained Admiral Doyle and selected staff officers at dinner at his newly established mess in Inchon.

Almond and Smith Disagree

By 23 September, the 32d Infantry had secured its objectives

Loaded in amphibious tractors and trucks, Korean Marines prepare to follow the 5th Marines across the Han River. A major portion of the 1st Korean Marine Corps Regiment had

followed the 5th Marines to Kimpo Airfield, made its first attack northwest of the field, and were now poised to liberate the Korean capital.

National Archives Photo (USA) 111-SC348702



1st Marine Division Casualties

15-23 September 1950

Date	KIA ¹	DOW ²	MIA ³	WIA ⁴	Total
15 Sept	20	1	1	174	196
16 Sept	2	1	1	22	26
17 Sept	6	0	0	70	76
18 Sept	7	3	0	92	102
19 Sept	10	1	0	61	72
20 Sept	24	1	3	119	147
21 Sept	30	3	0	198	231
22 Sept	27	3	0	135	165
23 Sept	19	7	0	117	143
Total	145	20	5	988	1,158

¹ KIA Killed in Action

² DOW Died in Action

³ MIA Missing in Action

⁴ WIA Wounded in Action

overlooking the Han, south and southeast of Yongdung-po. The 3d Battalion of the Army's highly regarded 187th Airborne Regiment, with Almond's "GHQ Raider Group" attached, arrived at Kimpo and temporarily came under 1st Marine Division control. Smith gave it the mission of covering his northwest flank, freeing the 7th Marines for a crossing of the Han.

Almond ordered his command post displaced forward from Inchon to Ascom City. During the day he visited Barr's command post and passed out a liberal number of Silver Stars, Bronze Stars, and Purple Hearts. Smith found Almond's practice of presenting on-the-spot awards disruptive and a cause for hurt feelings and misunderstandings. He thought Almond was inspired by Napoleon, but MacArthur was a more immediate practitioner. Smith had, it will be remembered, him-

self received a Silver Star from MacArthur as had Barr and Admiral Doyle. MacArthur was even more generous to Admiral Struble, giving him the Army's Distinguished Service Cross.

The 5th Marines was now firmly across the Han but was having difficulty in expanding its bridgehead. Mid-morning on the 23d, Almond met with Smith and urged him to put the 1st Marines across the river. He again complained that the Marines were not pressing the attack vigorously enough. Almond suggested that Smith cross the Han southeast of Seoul with the 1st Marines and then attack frontally into the city. Smith countered with a less-rash plan to have the 1st Marines cross at the 5th Marines' bridgehead. Almond reluctantly concurred.

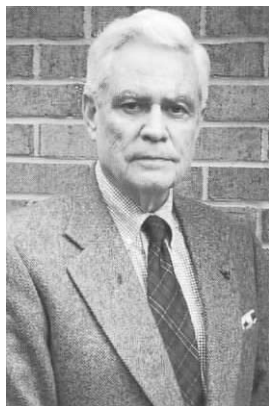
From 15 through 23 September, the 1st Marine Division had suffered 165 men killed in action or

died of wounds, 5 Marines still missing in action, and 988 men wounded. In turn the division had taken, by fairly accurate count, 1,873 prisoners, and claimed 6,500 enemy casualties.

During the day, 23 September, Smith visited the observation post of the 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, which had just taken Hill 108 overlooking the rail and highway bridges, their spans broken, into Seoul. A Marine major, who knew of O. P. Smith's study of the Civil War, presumed to remark that the position was similar to that of Burnside at Falmouth on the north bank of the Rappahannock across from Fredericksburg in December 1862. General Smith looked with amusement at the major and patiently explained that he would not make the same mistake as Burnside. There would be no frontal assault across the river into Seoul.

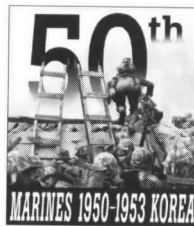
About the Author

Edwin Howard Simmons, a retired Marine brigadier general, was, as a major, the commanding officer of Weapons Company, 3d Battalion, 1st Marines, in the landing across Blue Beach Two at Inchon. His active service spanned 30 years—1942 to 1972—and included combat in World War II and Vietnam as well as Korea. A writer and historian all his adult life, he was the Director of Marine Corps History and Museums from 1972 until 1996 and is now the Director Emeritus.



He was born in Billingsport, New Jersey, the site of a battle along the Delaware River in the American Revolution, and received his commission in the Marine Corps through the Army ROTC at Lehigh University. He also has a master's degree from Ohio State University and is a graduate of the National War College. A one-time managing editor of the *Marine Corps Gazette*, he has been published widely, including more than 300 articles and essays. His most recent books are *The United States Marines: A History* (1998), *The Marines* (1998), and *Dog Company Six* (2000).

He is married, has four grown children, and lives with his wife, Frances, at their residence, "Dunmarchin," two miles up the Potomac from Mount Vernon.



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Other official histories of great use were Roy E. Appleman, *South to the Naktong, North to the Yalu* (Washington, D.C.: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1961); James A. Field, Jr., *History of United States Naval Operations: Korea* (Washington, D.C.: Government Printing Office, 1962); and James F. Schnabel, *Policy and Direction: The First Year* (Washington: Office of the Chief of Military History, Department of the Army, 1972).

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Valuable insights were provided by an Inchon war game developed at the Marine Corps Historical Center (MCHC) in 1987,

which examined the operation from the viewpoint of its principal commanders, using their reports, writings, and memoirs. Among the primary sources used, the most important were the unit files and records held by MCHC of the 1st Marine Division and its subordinate regiments and battalions. Also important were the biographic files held by Reference Section.

Other primary sources of great use were the oral histories, diaries, and memoirs of many of the participants. The most important of these were those of Generals Stratemeyer, Almond, Cates, Shepherd, O. P. Smith, Craig, V. H. Krulak, and Bowser, and Admirals Burke and Doyle. A fully annotated draft of the text is on file at the Marine Corps Historical Center. As is their tradition, the members of the staff at the Center were fully supportive in the production of this anniversary pamphlet. Photographs by Frank Noel are used with the permission of Associated Press/World Wide Photos.

